UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
3 1822 00649 3068

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

7 vols.

£10

BX
5037
B26
XX
V I

Central University Library
University of California, San Diego
Note: This item is subject to recall after two weeks.

Date Due

JUL 10 1991	

CI 39 (1/91) *UCSD Lib.*

THE WORKS

OF

DR. ISAAC BARROW.

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,

SUMMARY OF EACH DISCOURSE, NOTES, &c.

BY THE REV. T. S. HUGHES, B. D.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY A. J. VALPY, M.A.

AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1830.

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

HERBERT

LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH,

AND

LADY MARGARET'S PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

THESE VOLUMES,

CONTAINING

THE SERMONS OF DR. ISAAC BARROW,

ARE DEDICATED BY THE EDITOR;

NOT ONLY FROM MOTIVES OF PERSONAL RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,

BUT BECAUSE NO NAME IN THE PRESENT TIMES CAN WITH MORE PROPRIETY BE PREFIXED TO THE WRITINGS OF SO GREAT A MAN,

THAN THAT OF A PRELATE WHO FORMS A REMARKABLE PARALLEL WITH HIM IN THE COMBINED ACQUIREMENTS OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THEOLOGY.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

PAGE

Biographical Memoir of Dr. Isaac Barrow. . . ix

SERMONS.

I.—The Pleasantness of Religion.

Proverbs iii. 17.—Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. 1

II.—The Profitableness of Godliness.

1 Timothy iv. 8.— —— But godliness is profitable for all things. 22

III.—The Profitableness of Godliness.

1 Timothy iv. 8.— —— But godliness is profitable for all things. 47

IV.—The Reward of honoring God.

1 Samuel ii. 30.—For them that honor me I will honor. 74

PAGE

V.—Upright walking sure walking.
PROVERBS x. 9.—He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely. 102

VI.—Of the duty of Prayer.
1 THESSALONIANS v. 17.—Pray without ceasing. . 123

VII.—Of the duty of Prayer.
1 THESSALONIANS v. 17.—Pray without ceasing. . 140

VIII.—Of the duty of Thanksgiving.
EPHESIANS v. 20.—Giving thanks always for all things unto God. 162

IX.—Of the duty of Thanksgiving.
EPHESIANS v. 20.—Giving thanks always for all things unto God. 187

X.—On the King's happy return.
1 TIMOTHY II. 1. 2.—I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority. 219

XI.—On the Gunpowder-Treason.
PSALM LXIV. 9. 10.—And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory. 252

XII.—A Consecration Sermon.
PSALM CXXXII. 16.—I will also clothe her priests with salvation. 284

PAGE

XIII.—Not to offend in word an evidence of a high pitch of virtue.

JAMES III. 2.—If any man offend not in word, he is a perfect man. 321

XIV.—Against foolish talking and jesting.

EPHESIANS V. 4.——Nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient. 344

XV.—Against rash and vain swearing.

JAMES V. 12.—But above all things, my brethren, swear not. 373

XVI.—Of evil-speaking in general.

TITUS III. 2. —— To speak evil of no man. . . 401

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Publisher begs leave to acquaint his Subscribers, that the future Numbers of this Edition will be enriched with some hitherto unpublished Sermons of Dr. Barrow.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

OF

DR. ISAAC BARROW.

In the life of a scholar who has escaped the trammels of public employment, and shunned the turbulence of party faction, it cannot be expected that very numerous incidents should be found, to exercise the writer's judgment, or excite the reader's curiosity: yet neither of them will have reason to complain, provided the excellence of the subject compensates for the deficience of interest, and the spirit of emulation can be awakened, though curiosity may remain unsatisfied; in short, if they be led, as in the present instance, to the retrospect of splendid talents, great learning, and various acquirements, uniformly exerted in the cause of virtue and for the good of society. It is matter of surprise that some such considerations as these should never have induced any one, qualified for the undertaking, to collect more extensive information, and to compose a more complete biography, than has yet appeared, of the illustrious person who is the subject of our present memoir: the task was strongly recommended, soon after

his decease, by those who best knew his worth; but their suggestions were unheeded, until his contemporaries followed him to the silent grave; and little is known of Isaac Barrow beyond what is contained in a slight sketch drawn up by one of his executors,* and prefixed to the first edition of his works: fortunately however his own writings, particularly those whose Latin dress has too long kept them from general investigation, contain much accurate and authentic information respecting their author, furnishing us with as clear an insight into his character, as those of any writer who has not expressly left memorials of his own life. On these genuine and important documents therefore, aided by some additional information collected in a general course of reading, the Editor must rely, whilst he endeavors to do more justice than has hitherto been done, to one of the greatest names that adorn our annals.

At a very eventful period, when the political horizon began to darken with those storms which shook the foundation both of church and state, this great man was born in the metropolis, in the month of October, 1630.† He

* Abraham Hill, Esq. Dr. Ward added some new details, and corrected some errors: see the biography of Barrow, in his Lives of the Professors of Gresham College. The short account introduced by Dr. Pope into his life of the Bishop of Salisbury is to be received with some caution.

† This is Mr. A. Hill's account. Dr. Pope in his life of Seth, Lord Bishop of Salisbury, p. 129, says that this date is not right; for he had often heard Dr. Barrow himself say, that he was born on the 29th of February, which could not be in 1630, that not being a leap-year: the college register however of Peter House, where he was entered as *annum agens decimum quartum*, shows that Mr. Hill is not far from the truth at any rate. See Ward's Lives, p. 157.

was descended from worthy parents in a very respectable station of life, his father Thomas Barrow being a citizen of London in good repute, and his uncle Isaac elevated to the episcopal see of St. Asaph. His grandfather, Isaac Barrow, Esq. resided at Spiney Abbey in Cambridgeshire, where he was for the term of forty years in the commission for the peace. This Isaac was a son of Philip Barrogh, (for the name is differently spelt,) who published "A Method of Physic," and who had a brother, also named Isaac, a doctor in medicine, and a considerable benefactor to Trinity College, where he had been tutor to Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, Lord High Treasurer of England.

This is all that is recorded of Barrow's family by the father's side: his mother was Ann, daughter of William Buggin, Esq. of North Cray, in Kent, of whose tender care he was deprived at the early age of four years. His first school was that of the Charter House, where he continued but two or three years, and made very little progress in his learning; for he exhibited no precocity of intellect, no docility or appetite for study, but rather a great fondness for games and sports, especially such as produced quarrels and fighting amongst his schoolfellows. This sort of conduct gave his father very little hope that he would shine in the profession of a scholar, for which he designed him, and as little expectation of that comfort and satisfaction which he afterwards experienced from his son's dutiful and pious disposition: whence he often expressed a solemn wish, that if it should please God to take away any of his children, Isaac might be the one selected. "So vain a thing," says Mr. Hill, "is man's judgment; so unfit is our providence to guide our own affairs." In truth we should always be cautious before we condemn or

neglect a youth, on account of the early errors and irregularities into which he may fall: such extravagances are not always sure indications of depravity; since they may arise from high natural endowments, engrafted on an ardent disposition unimproved or misdirected; they should be regarded therefore with tender solicitude, and subjected to restraint by a skilful and experienced hand.

His father took the best preliminary step possible to correct young Barrow's propensities, by removing him from the scenes of his early habits, and placing him at Felsted in Essex, where he seems to have met with an excellent instructor and guide;* and it proves no inconsiderable knowlege of human nature in the master, that, when his young pupil's good qualities and great abilities began to show themselves, he appointed him to be *a little tutor*, (according to his biographer's expression,) to the Lord Viscount Fairfax of Emely in Ireland: yet though all inclination to quarrelling was thus subdued in the young man, an undaunted courage, both physical and moral, still remained in after-life; of which some instances will be recorded hereafter, and one may find a place here. Being sparing of sleep and a very early riser, he one morning went out of a friend's house before the family were up, when a large and fierce mastiff, that was unchained during the night, attacked him with great ferocity; Barrow however caught the savage animal by the throat, and after a long struggle bore him to the ground: there whilst he held him, he considered with himself what he had better do in the exigency of the case: once he had a mind to

* I am informed by a friend, who is himself a distinguished ornament of Felsted school, that the name of this master was Martin Holbeach.

kill him, but soon rejected that expedient, thinking it would be an unjust action, as the dog only did his duty, and he himself was in fault for rambling out of his lodging before day-light. At length he called out so loud that he awoke the people of the house, who rose and parted the combatants, Barrow having suffered no hurt beyond the straining of his wrists.

During his residence at Felsted, he was admitted a pensioner of Peter House,* which was Bishop Barrow's College; but when he was fit to be removed to the University in February 1645, his destination was changed to the noble foundation of Trinity, his uncle, together with Mr. Seth Ward, Peter Gunning, and John Barwick, having been ejected from his college the year before, for writing against the Covenant.† At this time his father was with the king at Oxford, having suffered so much from his adherence to the royal cause, that he could not have supported his son at college without assistance from one of those great and benevolent characters that shed a lustre on the age in which they live. The generous friend who thus held out the hand of encouragement to our young scholar was the celebrated Dr. Henry Hammond, himself a sufferer in the cause of loyalty, who took this method of restoring sound learning, piety, and discipline, to the established church. At the death of that eminent and good man in 1660, Barrow testified his gratitude in an epitaph consecrated to his memory, which I have inserted in the margin, not only as a specimen of the exuberant fertility of his style in Latin composition, but because it has been thought to describe with great accu-

* Dec. 15th, 1643.

† Life of Dr. John Barwick, p. 36.

racy the writer's character, as well as that of his friend.* The time of his undergraduateship was spent in the dili-

*LEGE, LUGE, DISCE.

Ne te prætergressum pœniteat, siste pedem hic et animum, Viator. Etenim, Hic jacet H. Hammond, S. T. D. Theologorum sui sæculi coryphæus. Literatorum princeps. Anglicæ gentis decus. Ecclesiæ columen. Veritatis assertor peritissimus. Pacis cultor devotissimus. Ordinis fautor studiosissimus. Antiquitatis genuinæ fidissimus interpres, et propugnator acerrimus. Sanctitatis magister præstantissimus. Omnibus ornamentis instructissimus. Philosophus solide acutus, dilucide subtilis. Orator inaffectate politus, nervose copiosus. Disputator vehemens, extra acerbitatem. Egregius criticus, absque superbia tamen aut supercilio. Lectionis infinitæ sed exquisite digestæ. Maximi ingenii, majoris judicii, consummatæ eruditionis cum pari modestia, tantis dotibus usus præclarissime. De ecclesia, principe, patria optime meritus. Utriusque tabulæ legum præco, observator, vindex. Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ ensis et clypeus; quam a falsi schismatis labe purgavit, a veri contagio munivit; Romanis hostibus, et perfugis sectariis fusis, fugatis. Sinceræ doctrinæ radio veteres tenebras pseudo-catholicas dispulit, nova lumina Anti-Catholica extinxit. Presbyteranam paritatem prostravit. Fanaticam licentiam coercuit. Temporum iniquitatem expugnavit scriptis victricibus, patientia triumphali. Ecclesiastici ordinis jurisque vindex fortissimus, ac felicissimus. Liturgiæ patronus consultissimus. Theologicorum dogmatum scrutator sedulus. Difficultatum enodator accuratus. Veritatum explorator sagax. Novum Testamentum, et Psalterium Davidicum, luculenta paraphrasi, eximio commentario, sancto exemplo illustravit. Calamo scripsit, vita edidit practicum catechismum. Christianæ fortitudinis, patientiæ, mansuetudinis illustre exemplar. Mentis insigni prudentia, invicta constantia, candore illibato, solertia indefessa mirabilis. Morum integritate spectabilis, gravitate venerabilis, comitate amabilis. Summa pietate in Deum; extrema fide in principem; propensa charitate in omnes conspicuus. Vir scholasticus, theologus, plane incomparabilis, omni epitheto major, quolibet elogio potior. Meruit haberi martyr assiduus pro ecclesia cu-

gent prosecution of his studies; and though he was at this important period of his life emancipated from the restraint of paternal admonition, he showed that he needed it not, by the purity of his conduct, and the attention which he paid to his religious and moral duties.

In the year 1643, the famous *Covenant* had been ratified between England and Scotland; which, whilst it pretended to secure the privileges of parliament, the liberties of the nation, and the king's authority, openly avowed the overthrow of prelacy and of the established church. This covenant, having been taken by the members of both Houses, was inforced, not only in the city of London and many other parts of the kingdom, but with peculiar rigor in the two universities, where many conscientious individuals, masters, fellows, and students, were ejected from their several stations on their refusal to submit to its terms. The loyalty of Barrow led him steadfastly to reject this oath, though he carried himself with such general fairness, candor, and prudence, that he gained friends where he might least have expected them: among these was Dr. Hill, Master of the College, who had been appointed by the parliament in the place of Dr. Comber, ejected for his adherence to the royal cause. This gen-

---

ris et vigiliis confectus. Occidit diei nostri Lucifer anno 1660 salutis partæ, primo Regis restituti, patriæ liberatæ, ecclesiæ instauratæ; quæ a se strenue promota, et ardenter concupita præsagiit animo, sed oculo non adspectavit, in hoc felicissime infelix.—Vade, Cogita, Imitare.

Nec magnum tamen *Hammondum* satis ulla loquantur
Saxa, nec a morsu temporis ulla tegant.
Clarius ostendit scriptis se illustribus, illo
Digna sui tantum sunt monumenta libri.

tleman, meeting Barrow one day in the court, is said to have laid his hand on his head, and thus to have addressed him: "Thou art a good lad; 'tis a pity thou art a cavalier." Also at another time, when the youth had made a public oration on the anniversary of the 5th of November, and had celebrated former times in such a manner as to reflect on the present, the Master screened him from the resentment of some amongst the fellows, who were provoked even to move for his expulsion, silencing them with a striking testimony to the excellence of his character; and probably not without some misgiving of his own conscience: "Barrow," said he, "is a better man than any of us."

A few years afterwards the *Engagement*, another oath very obnoxious to the royalists, was instituted by the prevailing party, requiring all persons to profess true allegiance to the government, as then established without King or House of Lords; whilst they who refused it were declared incapable of holding any office in church or state. Barrow was probably induced by considerations like those, which determined Sir Matthew Hale and many other eminent conscientious individuals, to acknowlege an unjust but prevailing power: he accordingly signed the Engagement; but soon afterwards repenting of what he had done, he went back to the commissioners, declared his dissatisfaction, and got his name erased from the list; continuing ever after, amidst all the tergiversations of party-men and the seductions of self-interest, to move in the straitforward course of honor and loyalty. In 1647 he was chosen a scholar of the house.

With respect to the junior members of the college, his contemporaries, he is reported to have been very ready in giving the assistance of his superior talents to those who

needed it; though in return for many exercises, both in prose and verse, he never received any recompense, except one pair of gloves. The same disinterestedness seems to have accompanied him through life; for he never but twice obtained any pecuniary emolument from the excellent and laborious sermons, which he was willing to deliver on all occasions.

At a time when the studies of our universities were confined within much narrower limits than at present, when the intellectual powers were cramped, and the progress of knowlege retarded, by the remains of that scholastic philosophy which neglected experiment for hypothesis, and dwelt on distinctions of matter, form, and essence, too nice to be understood, Barrow set a worthy example of breaking through the trammels of prejudice, into the regions of true and legitimate science. Disgusted with what was falsely called the Aristotelian philosophy, he turned his attention to the writings of Lord Bacon, Galileo, Descartes, and other great writers of the preceding age; and though he was afterwards obliged to reject some notions thence obtained,* yet by this course he acquired general habits of sound reasoning, and enlightened views on the subject of education. Nor did he cultivate the abstruse sciences only; for he exercised his powers of imagination by poetry, refined his taste by a diligent reading of the classic authors, improved his judgment and philosophy by the study of history, ethics, and legislation, whilst he laid the foundation of those eminent theological acquirements, which crowned his labors, as they have se-

* In his Opuscula is a long Thesis intitled, "Cartesiana Hypothesis de Materia et Motu haud satisfacit præcipuis Naturæ Phænomenis. In Comitiis 1652."

cured his fame. He had, as was said of another extraordinary individual, "that general curiosity, to which no kind of knowlege is indifferent or superfluous:" he was aware how all the objects of human intellect combine together, and what mutual light is shed from truth to truth: he knew that mental, like corporeal vigor, is maintained and increased by exercise; and that a superior mind is aided, not oppressed, by the various stores of literary attainment: above all, he never looked on his studies in the light of a selfish amusement, but pursued them from the highest motives, the advancement of virtue, and the melioration of society.

Such appear to have been the sentiments and pursuits of Barrow in the early stages of his academical life; nor to these did he ever prove false in his future brilliant career. In 1648 he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts; but as the names in this and several succeeding years are arranged, in the University Register, according to colleges, without any regard to the order of merit, it is impossible to determine his place on the tripos: had such order been then established, there can be little doubt where the name of Newton's great precursor would have appeared. The following is the recorded account of his introduction to mathematical studies. Reading Scaliger on Eusebius, he soon perceived the dependence of chronology on astronomy: this put him on the study of Ptolemy's Almagest; but finding that book and all astronomical calculations to be founded on geometry, he applied himself to Euclid's Elements, of which he published a new and improved edition: from thence he proceeded to the demonstration of the other ancient mathematicians, having as an associate in these invigorating studies, the celebrated naturalist John Ray, a

man of the same honest independent spirit as himself,* to whom he was ever afterwards united in the strictest bonds of friendship.

It would be gratifying to know who were the other intimate companions of his youth; but we are informed by his biographer that he had few, except in his own college: of this we may be certain, that none but the studious and the good were the associates of Isaac Barrow. There can be little doubt but that his friendship with the learned and amiable Tillotson, at this time a student of Clare Hall, was thus early formed, as well as that with Abraham Hill, one of his executors, and his brief biographer; and though the intimacy was of a later date, and Barrow appears in the light of a patron as well as that of a friend, we may perhaps insert in this list the name of him who stands highest in the annals of scientific fame, the immortal Newton. Such was Barrow's regard for that great man, that he not only fostered and encouraged his rising genius, but by his disinterested generosity gave occasion for the display of his matured excellence, when he resigned to him the mathematical chair in 1699. Yet such was his impartiality, that when, as Master of the College, he had to decide on the merits of Newton and Mr. Robert Uvedale, who were candidates for a lay-fellowship, he preferred Mr. Uvedale as senior of the two, when he found them equal in literary attainments.†

---

* In 1662, Ray, being unwilling to comply with the act of uniformity, resigned his fellowship, though the college strongly urged him to retain it. Barrow was a decided, conscientious, orthodox member of the establishment; but this difference of principles created no other difference between those great and good men.

† Hutchins's Dorsetshire, vol. ii. p. 504. 2nd edit.

When the time came that Barrow could be chosen fellow, he obtained that distinction solely by his great merit; since nothing else could have recommended him to his electors, whose political opinions were generally adverse to his own: his case affords but an example of that strict impartiality which seems ever to have distinguished the rulers of this noble college, when left to the free exercise of their elective rights. In 1651 he commenced Master of Arts; and from a Latin speech preserved in his Opuscula, it appears that he executed the office of Moderator that same year.* In the speech alluded to, which is a very remarkable specimen of mature judgment, as well as of various and extensive scholarship, in so young a man, he gives many admirable instructions both to young and old; indignantly reprehends the vices and follies of a dissolute age; indicates the best remedies; and recommends the noblest objects of study; but in particular he inveighs with caustic severity against that licentiousness which, in the place of wit, seems to have tainted the speeches of his predecessors in the schools; insomuch that custom demanded of him to undertake, as it were, the combined character of Ulysses and Thersites, of Democritus and Heraclitus; or on the same stage to act the part of Cato and of Roscius. Barrow however, after a severe objurgation of his audience, who stood gaping for their accustomed jests, refuses to become a buffoon for their amusement, or a pandar to their depraved taste;

* The title of this speech is "Oratio Modi: in Auspiciis termini Apr. 30, 1651." In this case he must have been Moderator immediately after he had incepted, and before he was created M. A. or he was created by a special grace, which was not an uncommon thing in those days.

whilst with great naïveté and candor he professes himself ready to indulge in that cheerful festive humor which made him the delight and ornament of society. *Illud si verum sit, quod fama loquitur, stomachos vestros solidi omnis cibi pertæsos, et dapium Rhetoricarum nauseam, et salubrioris Philosophiæ gravedinem usque adeo invasisse, ut præter futilia quædam bellaria, et putidissima nugarum fercula palato vestro nihil sapiat; nè ipsa sapientia, nisi insipida, neque veritas, nisi jocis condita, neque ratio, nisi ridiculo tincta; mala profecto sorte ego vobis coquus sum datus, ad illum inanium deliciarum apparatum neque ingenio factus, neque studio institutus . . . . . Innocentes jocos, tempestivos sales, liberales facetias, (ità me Musæ omnes et Gratiæ ament) nemo est usquam qui me sinceriùs diligat, nemo qui tetricam illam et inanem plerumque austeritatem vehementius detestetur.**

About this time he seems to have applied himself with considerable diligence to Latin versification; but the subjects selected for the exercise of his muse were, according to the taste of the age, better adapted to scholastic disputation than to the divine art of poesy.† Conceiving also that the times were unpropitious to men of his opinion in the affairs of church and state, he designed to follow the profession of medicine; accordingly for some years he bent the course of his studies that way, making great progress in the sciences of botany, chemistry, and anatomy. But after mature deliberation with himself, and frequent conference with his worthy uncle the Bishop of St. Asaph, he determined to make divinity the end and aim

* Opuscula, p. 136.

† See his Opuscula, pp. 248—267.

of all his labors; conceiving himself bound to this by the oath which he had taken when elected to a fellowship. Henceforward he never lost sight of this principle of action; and whether he dwelt with congenial spirits in the Academic groves, or with the barbaric spoilers of the Byzantine throne, we find him still engaged in theological inquiries, and imbibing sacred eloquence from the works of departed sages.

With regard to the character which he established for himself amongst his contemporaries, nothing more amiable can well be imagined. He seems to have had no enemies: all respected his manly independence; admired his integrity and urbanity; enjoyed the sunshine of his benevolent temper, and the enlivening eloquence of his discourse; whilst they were improved by the facility with which he communicated to them the riches of his well-stored mind, and by the instructive comments which he used to make, as well on the importance as on the truth of questions under discussion.* This combination of amiable and exalted qualities was the talisman which preserved him safe in all the conflicts of those disordered times; which rendered him beloved by all his associates whilst he was their equal, and unenvied when he became their superior.

Barrow's tutor during his undergraduateship had been the celebrated Dr. Duport, Greek professor, and afterwards Dean of Peterborough; who, as one of his learned successors in both these pieces of preferment, has well observed,† appears to have been the main instrument by which literature was upheld in the seventeenth century; and who,

* See his biography by Mr. A. Hill. Works vol. i. fol. edit.

† Dr. Monk, now Bishop of Glocester. See his Memoir of Duport in the Museum Criticum, vol. ii. p. 672.

though seldom named and little known at present, enjoyed an almost transcendent reputation for a great length of time amongst his contemporaries, as well as in the generation which immediately succeeded. This eminent scholar, though ejected from his prebendal stall at Lincoln, and his archdeaconry of Stowe, for refusing the Covenant, was yet suffered to retain his professorship, the duties of which he continued to discharge before a large audience during all the troubles and commotions of the civil war: but even this piece of well-merited preferment was taken from him in 1654 by the commissioners of University reform, who rejected from all offices, at discretion, such members as refused subscription to the Engagement. According to Mr. A. Hill's account, Duport *resigned* the professorial chair, and recommended his favorite pupil Barrow for his successor, who justified his tutor's good opinion of him by a very able probationary exercise, though he failed of success, through an opinion among the electors that he was inclined to Arminianism. It is stated however on better authority,* that the commissioners themselves conferred the office on Ralph Widdrington, fellow of Christ's College,† whose literary merits would probably not have had so much weight with those worthies, as his relationship to Sir Thomas Widdrington, Commissioner of the Great Seal, and Speaker of Cromwell's Parliament.

Disappointed in this object of honorable ambition, and wishing to escape from the fanaticism which reigned in his own country, Barrow projected a scheme of foreign travel; nor can we wonder that a person with so cultivated a

* Memoir of Duport in Mus. Crit. vol. ii. p. 683.

† He had been appointed in a similar manner Public Orator three years previous to this event.

mind should be anxious to improve his knowlege of books by experience of the world; or that he should pant to survey the triumphs of modern art, and to traverse those delightful scenes where the Spirit of antiquity still seems to linger.

Accordingly in the month of June* 1655, after having sold his books to provide means for his voyage, he left England, and proceeded in the first instance to Paris: there he found his father, at the court of his exiled sovereign, and made him a seasonable present out of his slender *viaticum*. Soon after his arrival he dispatched a long letter to his college,† in which he gives an amusing and instructive account of his journey, as well as of those objects which particularly interested him in the French capital.

After a poetical though somewhat confused exordium, he prays that the Goddess of Health may wing her flight to his beloved Alma Mater, in some flowing lines, which contain a curious compliment to the sedgy Cam, as well as to the regal Seine.‡

The vessel in which he left his native shores seems to have been scarcely sea-worthy; a wretched bark, more like a witch's sieve than an English packet.

---

* See Ward's Lives of the Gresham Professors, p. 158.

† It is a Latin letter, the first part written in hexameters, the second in prose: he calls it 'Epistolæ ἐμμέτρου pariter ac ἀμέτρου quoddam rudimentum.'

‡ Ad doctos pontes, *tumidis quos alluit acer*
Camus aquis; Camus, quo non dilectior alter
Rivulus Aönides conspergit rore puellas,
(Nec veteres olim qui præterfluxit Athenas,
Nec qui Parisiis *præbet modo balnea Musis*,)
Carpat iter.

—Theseâ puppis rugosior, Argûs
Quæ numerare annos, Argique foramina posset;
Ignibus exponi quam sævis dignior undis.

Accordingly old Nereus, in pity or contempt, indulges the crew with a calm, which operates with terrible effect on the stomach of our fresh-water sailor; though he revives at sight of the lofty cliffs of Normandy, in which fine province he first sets foot on a foreign soil.

The vessel enters that port, into which, as Barrow observes, the great Henry IV. ran his bark when almost shipwrecked in the waves of political commotion; alluding to that great monarch's flight to Dieppe, as a last place of refuge in 1589, when he won the hearts of its citizens by his frank and manly address to them :—"Mes amis, point de cérémonie; je ne demande que vos cœurs, bon pain, bon vin, et bon visage d'hôtes." Nor was it long before he who came a suppliant returned a conqueror, having gloriously defeated the army of the League, in the plain of Arques, when its commander the Duke de Mayenne retreated from forces ten times less than his own in numerical strength.* Henry then rebuilt the castle of Dieppe, and conferred honorable titles on the city—*parvam titulis Diepam regalibus auxit.*

When our traveller lands, he is astonished at the crowd of women in the streets, and supposes that Henry, who was a great lover of the sex, was not unwilling to trust his fortune to such partisans: he notices, however, their

* Henry's speech before this battle to his prisoner the Count de Belin, when asked by the latter how he could hope to resist so powerful an army with so small a force, is very characteristic of him. "Ajoutez aux troupes que vous voyez, mon bon droit, et vous ne douterez plus de quel côté sera la victoire."

general want of beauty,* as well as their very irascible disposition; which is not at all surprising, since the fish-market of Dieppe rivals our Billingsgate, and the nymphs of such districts claim a right, from time immemorial, to the free exercise of temper and tongue. The French ladies however seem to have been at this time desirous of extending their privileges; for he is witness of a desperate attack which they made on the hotel of the unfortunate collector of customs, after having loaded their aprons on the beach with weapons such as those which Telamonian Ajax hurled at his antagonist Hector.

Dieppe does not present now the same features which Barrow saw and admired; for it was utterly destroyed by the English in the memorable bombardment of 1694, with the exception of the fine church of St. Jacques, that of St. Remi, and the castle, which stands on an eminence at the western extremity of the town. The adjacent country, however, does not seem to have changed its appearance, since our traveller described its broad roads and fertile fields, with rows of apple-trees for lines of demarcation, the ruddy color of whose pendulous fruit inflames the bosom and invites the hand of the passenger.—*Hæ sata præcingunt, hæ compita cuncta coronæ.*

After curiously describing the turning-lathe, he adverts to that exquisite manufacture in ivory for which the place is still celebrated, and which owes its origin to the first Christian settlement on the coast of Senegal, which was made by the mariners of Dieppe.† *Numidicum vertunt ebur in*

---

* Sed quum mille vides, non est spectabilis una.

† It was possibly (says Dr. Dibdin in his very amusing tour) under the bold excursion of such distinguished navigators and captains as

miracula rerum. Thence he digresses to the numerous monastic orders, whom he lashes with great severity of sarcasm.

Going to St. Jacques, he finds all his bile moved by the absurdities of the popish mass, by the decorations of the altars, by the vestments of the priests, and by the frauds of superstition practised in the nineteen little chapels, which stand round the body of that church, "as chickens surround the mother hen." He is horrified at the degrading mummeries and pageants exhibited in the religious festivals; but his fiercest anger is poured out against the idolatrous act of transubstantiation; and probably the idea then first entered his mind of writing that treatise against papal supremacy, which is sufficient to carry his name down to the latest posterity. In the mean time he gives vent to his indignation in the following lines:

Quod nisi jam tantis reverentia debita rebus
Injiceret Musæ taciturni fræna pudoris,
Porrigit immensum justa indignatio campum,
Quo tumidum pectus conceptas explicet iras;
Quum reputat quali male sanus fronte sacerdos
Mirifico tribus evulgatis ore susurris
Se jactat fecisse Deum, factumque vorasse.

Parmentier, Dusmesnil, and the great merchant Ango, in the 16th and 17th centuries, that the ivory trade attained its highest pitch of prosperity. The establishments of the Dieppois in Guinea necessarily facilitated the means of improving this branch of commerce. Walpole in his *Anecd. of Painting*, v. iii. p. 262, makes honorable mention of Le Marchand, a native of Dieppe, who worked very successfully for several years in London. Evelyn, who visited Dieppe in 1644, observes that it then "abounded with workmen who made and sold curiosities of *ivory* and *tortoise-shell*, and whatever the East Indies afforded for cabinets and purcelan, &c."—Bibliographical Tour, v. i. p. 18.

On his journey towards Rouen he dilates on the excellence and cheapness of the Norman cider; nor does he forget to indulge in reflexions on the romantic history of William the Conqueror, who breathed his last in this splendid and populous capital of the province:

——— sed ejus
Abrupit stamen medium objice villa superbo
Illustris quam tota vocat provincia matrem:
Magna satis, tectis pulchra, instructissima vitæ
Subsidiis, populi locuples, uberrima gazis,
Queîs dives tellus, queîs ditius affluit æquor;
Quas ibi per Sequanæ vicina volumina Nereus
Deponit, dulcisque tributa remunerat undæ.

Indeed, he must be a dull traveller who can behold without emotion the magnificent approach to this noble city, lying, with its rich Gothic towers and spires, embosomed in picturesque hills, and smiling over its broad and tributary stream.

Our traveller's attention is first directed to the ruins of a magnificent stone bridge, (once consisting of thirteen arches, built by the Empress Maud, daughter of Henry I. king of England;) and next to its ingeniously-constructed substitute of massive timber, placed over nineteen barges, the undulatory motion of which, and its rise or fall with the tide are thus described:

——quem non excisi cautibus orbes
Sustentant, curvis nec ligneus ordo columnis
Subjicitur stabili fundamine; puppibus omnis
Incumbit, variisque incertæ legibus undæ
Obsequitur; nunc elatus torrente superbo
Assurgit, mox deprimitur cum gurgite manco: &c.

Leaving the banks of the Seine, he enters the picturesque old town which even now carries the traveller back,

and places him amongst the habitations of men who existed in the sixteenth century, unprofaned by *modern improvements*.

Here his eye is attracted by the splendid mansions of the archbishop and the nobility ; by the fine market-place, *lautitiasque fori grandes luxusque macelli ;* and by that curious specimen of Gothic architecture, which holds a middle station between ecclesiastic and domestic, the far-famed *Palais de Justice*. Heylin, who also saw the building in perfection, thus describes its grand hall: "it is so gallantly and richly built, that I must needs confess it surpasseth all that ever I saw in my life. The palace of the Louvre hath nothing in it comparable; the ceiling is all inlaid with gold, yet doth the workmanship exceed the matter:" and Barrow's account corresponds with the foregoing, when he speaks of the

> præclara palatia Legum,
> Cœlatas auro cameras, serpentia muris
> Lilia, quà vario celebratur curia cœtu.

From hence he proceeds to the churches, amongst which that glory of Gothic architecture, St. Ouen,* stands pre-eminent, though he leaves it undescribed, attracted by the

* The lightness, the elegance, the beautiful proportions, and the appropriate ornaments, of this church are, as far as my experience goes, quite unrivalled. To omit its magnificent rose-windows, its airy columns, and its finely-vaulted roof, it has one feature peculiar to itself, which covers the architect with glory. I allude to the fine open gallery which runs round the whole church, nave transepts and choir, in place of a triforium, and which allows an unusual altitude to the noble windows, whose painted glass is seen through the tracery. The length of this church in French feet is 416; that of the transepts 130: its breadth is 78, and the height of the vaulted roof 100. The central tower is 240 feet high.

superior external magnificence of the cathedral and its ambitious spire, which will not suffer itself to be so neglected:—

> —nec de se sinit ambitiosa taceri
> Quæ sola ex tribus a trunco surgentibus uno
> Eminet, atque impellit acuta cuspide nubes.*

In describing the ornaments and fine monuments in this edifice, he falls into the common error of supposing most of them to have been executed whilst the English had possession of the province; and when he notices this as the burial-place of the Regent Duke of Bedford, who must be consigned to eternal infamy as the base murderer of the heroic Joan of Arc, he notices also the high-minded answer of Louis XI. who, when he was counselled by envious persons to deface the tomb of his antagonist, used

* This tower, which fell a few years since by a conflagration, was 380 French feet in height. The length of the cathedral is 408 feet, its breadth 83, and the height of its vaulted roof 84. Its great western front is perhaps the most gorgeous façade that any church possesses, uniting vastness and variety of outline, with richness of ornament, and picturesque effect, to a marvellous degree: its highest point of elevation is about 250 feet, and its breadth 180: its two flanking towers are noble structures, particularly that at the S.W. corner, which almost rivals the central tower of St. Ouen in height and richness of decoration: it is sometimes called the *tour de beurre*, from the impost on that article granted for its erection, or *tour d'Amboise*, from the distinguished prelate under whom it was begun and finished, and who placed therein his enormous bell: the three deep porches and pediments of this façade are filled with innumerable statues of popes, emperors, kings, cardinals, bishops, &c. Probably the north and south porches of this cathedral are equally unrivalled; but its interior is as inferior to that of St. Ouen as St. Paul's is to St. Peter's.

these princely words: "What honor shall it be for us, or you, to break this monument, and to pull out of the ground the bones of him, whom in his life-time neither my father nor his progenitors, with all their puissance, were once able to make fly a foot backward? who by his strength, policy, and wit, kept them all out of the principal dominions of France, and out of this noble duchy of Normandy? Wherefore I say first, *God save his soul!* and let his body now lie in rest, which, when he was alive, could have disquieted the proudest of us all. And for *this tomb*, I assure you it is not so worthy or convenient as his honor and acts have deserved."*

> Herois monumenta rapi, manesque lacessi
> Tranquillos (magnis terrentur scilicet umbris
> Degeneris animæ) vanâ exoptantibus irâ,
> Rex etiam fato oppressæ virtutis amicus
> Abnuit, et qui se potuit defendere vivus,
> Judice me, dixit, meruit post fata quietem.

Yet the tomb, after all, had disappeared, and Barrow was disappointed in his search for it:—*tumulum spes irrita quærit*. He was not aware that the French Calvinists, who were quite as malignant as the English Puritans, destroyed it in their merciless attacks on ecclesiastical architecture

* Sandford, Ed. 1707. p. 315. "There is a curious chapter," says Dr. Dibdin, "in Pommeraye's 'Histoire de l'Eglise Cath. de Rouen,' p. 203, respecting this duke's taking the habit of a canon of the cathedral, attending with his first wife, Anne of Burgundy, and throwing himself on the liberality and kindness of the monks, to be received by them as one of their order." This almost matches the act of Lady Margaret foundress of St. John's Coll. Camb., who made herself a vestal, and took the vows, in her old age, and after having had three husbands.

in the sixteenth century, when, besides other atrocities, they disinterred the bodies of St. Ouen, St. Nicaise, and St. Remi, burned them in the very church, and scattered their ashes to the winds.

But though Barrow is unable to discover the sepulcre of his countryman,* he sees and describes with admiration the sumptuous monument erected to the great minister Cardinal d'Amboise, by his nephew, who succeeded him in the archbishopric of Rouen. The labor of seven years was expended on this superb work;

> Quâ merito minor Ambosius sub marmore clausus
> Conspicuo perituri oblivia nominis arcet.
> Marmora quid loquor? hunc resonabit buccina major,
> Et spisso clamore per æthera differet altum
> Immani vocis certamine GEORGIUS ingens:
> Cujus in eloquium si vastam impellere molem
> Vis hominum posset, Gangetidis incola ripæ
> Ultimus audiret perculsâ mente sonantem;
> Exaudiret totus et obsurdesceret orbis:
> Concussas nutare domos, fragilesque fenestras
> Dissultare, feros flatus regnare videres.
> Is posset clamor cunctas perrumpere sphæras, &c.

---

* On a lozenge behind the altar is the following inscription:

AD DEXTRUM ALTARIS LATUS
JACET
JOHANNES DUX BEDFORDI
NORMANNIÆ PROREX.
OBIIT ANNO
MCCCCXXXV.

In a chapel of this cathedral is the tomb of Rollo, first duke of Normandy, and in one opposite is that of his son William Longsword: the effigies of both are still preserved. The tombs that once adorned the choir, those of Charles V. of France, of Richard Cœur-de-Lion (whose heart was buried here), and of William son

Few readers probably would guess the instrument which Barrow here declares so fit to carry the fame of his hero over all the realms of earth and air: be it then known that in these *sonorous* verses he alludes to an enormous bell, the largest ever suspended in frame-work, with which the Cardinal adorned his tower, and which was called after its donor's name, *Georges d'Amboise*, like our *Tom* of Lincoln. It was cast in 1501 by one *Jean le Masson*, who is said to have died with joy at his success in the attempt, not living to hear its sound when it was first swung in 1502 by sixteen sturdy ringers.* Its diameter at the base was 30 feet, and its weight 33,000 pounds; that of its clapper being 1838 pounds, which occasioned its fracture, when it was rung in 1786 on the occasion of Louis XVIth's paying a visit to Rouen.†

Quitting with reluctance this monster of sound, which he has celebrated in notes deep-mouthed as its own, our traveller resumes his journey along the beautiful banks of the Seine, studded with woody isles, in the direction of Paris. As he proceeds southward, he remarks, what is still observable, the appearance and gradual increase of vines, succeeding to the apple-trees of Lower Normandy.

---

of Geoffrey Plantagenet, were removed in 1736, as interfering with the works then going forward: they have since been destroyed; but there still remains a beautiful monument erected to the Duke de Brezé, grand Seneschal of Normandy, by his celebrated but faithless spouse, Diana of Poitiers.

* Pommeraye, p. 50.

† This clapper is said to be still preserved; but the bell itself was taken down at the Revolution, and melted for the purpose of casting cannon.

Sic dum pomiferis celeres excedimus arvis,
Persequimurque diem medium, fontesque calorum,
Obrepit Bacchus sensim, parcèque trementes
Excrit in limbos inimici frigoris ulnas:
Mox tepidi afflatu factus fidentior Austri
Densius objectat vineta feracia: &c.

When he enters the Elysian valley of Montmorency, whose fields glow with the ruddy purple of the cherry, added to that of the grape, Paris, the present goal of his desires, opens to view, and he abruptly closes the poetical part of this epistle.

In the remaining portion, he modestly proposes to supply this defect by the addition of some *bungling* prose. An inspection however of his composition will soon show that the character given of it by himself is not to be relied on; for though his rich and exuberant flow of genius does at times overwhelm his taste, and judgment, and discretion; though he often exhibits sentences inaccurately constructed, or employs words of inferior latinity, and phrases not quite analogous to the rules of syntax; yet he has the language fully at command, dives into its deepest recesses, and, as it were, exhausts its energies in the boundless variety of his expressions.

In this part of his dispatch from the French capital Barrow discovers such a close attention to passing events, such a keen discrimination of character, and such a remarkable insight into political causes and effects, that it seems probable, if he had early addicted himself to such pursuits, he would have made a great statesman, especially if honesty and integrity be considered an addition to pre-eminent abilities.

Very few years before his arrival at Paris, Louis XIV.

had been set free from the restraints of his minority, and the troubles of civil war: the tranquillity of peace, says our author, had succeeded to the din of arms; fortune favored the external projects of the French monarch; and the internal face of things presented a smiling aspect to the unreflecting observer: at court splendor and gallantry reigned triumphant; plays, masquerades, balls, feasts, and every other species of amusement seemed to form the chief business of life; and nothing of ill omen appeared, or was expected. Yet the keen eye of Barrow saw the elements of mischief lurking beneath the deceitful surface of things: he saw, and although the revolutionary tempest may have exploded later than was anticipated, he asks with a kind of prophetic spirit, "what state of affairs can be durable, which is supported by violence? Who can preserve undisturbed the patience of a people whose very bowels are unceasingly torn by the hooks of extortion; where the minds of the lower ranks are exasperated against the nobility, by the memory of past, and the sense of present injuries; where the administration of law and justice is not confided to those who are fitted for it by integrity and legal knowlege, but where that which ought to be the reward of virtue becomes the means of gain to the avaricious; where the distribution of high offices in the army, in the state, and at the court, is not made with reference to dignity and worth, but to the price offered by purchasers; where the soldiers who hazard limbs and life for their country receive words for pay, and are happy when they obtain a tythe of the latter; where, in short, the nation is kept within the bounds of duty, not by the attractive power of benevolence towards their superiors, but by force and the reins of terror? When such a disgraceful state of things is

constantly seen, talked of, and urged as the means of excitement, what firm hope can there be of peace; what lasting possession of tranquillity?"

He next portrays with a masterly hand the character and fortunes of that ambitious minister, "sprung (as he observes) from the same country as the giants,"* and now at the head of affairs in France:—*Rerum potitur quidam Gigantum patriâ oriundus; qui ex obscuræ conditionis angustiis tandem in ecclesiasticæ purpuræ amplitudinem enixus, cum principibus regio sanguine claris, fortitudine consilio et favore populari subnixis, περὶ πρωτείων authoritatis et potentiæ certare ausus, ex impari congressu superior evasit. Mox cum adversâ fortunâ conflictari sustinuit, et suo culmine deturbatus, fugatus, hostis reipublicæ pronunciatus, reditum suum procurare, amissa gubernacula recuperare, adversarios successu exultantes reprimere, eorumque quosdam in ordinem redigere, alios ex arenâ abigere potuit: nunc in authoritatis sedem repositus, in eâ stabilius firmari videtur: præcipuos principum et nobilium sibi affinitate et necessitudine devinxit: provinciarum rectores ab ejus nutu pendent;* &c.

He then goes on to expose that extraordinary avarice of the man, and that system of extortion, which may shake even this *Marpesian rock*, may move *this Delos*, ἀκίνητόν περ ἐοῦσαν. As an instance of the Cardinal's peculation, he describes an attempt lately made by him to debase the public money, through the introduction of gold and silver pieces called *lilies*. These not only contained more alloy, but were less in weight by one sixth than the current coin of the realm: great murmurs were raised not only by the

* Cardinal Mazarin, of an ancient *Sicilian* family transplanted to Rome, was born in 1602; died in 1661.

common people, but by commercial men, and by the parliament of Paris, which refused to ratify the king's edict, and even began to deliberate about means for redressing the evil. Louis however now determined to restrain this assembly, which had made many struggles for power in the beginning of his reign, within its ancient limits.* Having ordered them to attend to their proper business, and sent the chancellor to threaten them with his vengeance unless they immediately registered his edict, he banished five of their counsellors, and thus put an end to their opposition; though the quiet thence produced had a more dangerous appearance than the previous commotion.

Barrow next turns to the state of theological affairs; giving a very interesting and animated account of the disputes then agitating the Sorbonne, particularly the curious disputations and judicial proceedings which had lately taken place between the Jesuits and Arnauld the celebrated Jansenist, when the presence of a bigoted chancellor,† sent on the part of the king, and an enormous number of clamorous Mendicants who filled the hall, procured an unjust sentence of expulsion against the accused, and gave occasion to the famous Pascal for observing, in his Provincial Letters, "*that it was a much easier thing to find Monks than arguments.*"

Barrow augurs well for the security of protestantism in the realm, from a court anecdote at that time in circula-

* Le Roi dès l' année 1655, était venu au parlement, en grosses bottes et un fouet a la main, défendre les assemblées des chambres, et il avait parlé avec tant de chaleur, que dès ce jour on prévit un changement total dans le royaume.—Hist. du Parl. de Paris, par M. Voltaire, p. 265.

† Seguier.

tion. It was said that the Archbishop of Thoulouse, a man of high character for erudition, having lately arrived from his province, had been with the queen-mother, Anne of Austria, and made bitter complaints against the liberty accorded to members of the reformed church there, whom he dignified by the epithets of heretics and rebels, imploring her Majesty's aid against their evil machinations. Instead, however, of the reply which he expected, the queen informed him that better subjects did not exist in all the realm, and extolled their loyalty far above that of their accusers. To this opinion one of the marshals of France, present at the conference, warmly assented, as did the king also himself, who came in soon after and learned the subject of their conversation: he added moreover his determination of securing to his protestant subjects all the liberty which they had obtained by the edicts of his predecessors. Yet this was the bigoted tyrant who in a few years afterwards revoked the Edict of Nantes, exposed these best of subjects to the most horrible persecutions, and by one execrable act of despotism forced thousands to seek for liberty and life far from the limits of their native land.

Turning to the subject of literature and science, Barrow laments the present deficiency of talent, and can find no names worthy of being mentioned but those of Arnaud and Robervalle. In perambulating the numerous colleges, he sees nothing eminent except their roofs; nothing conspicuous but their walls; declaring that the Sorbonne, the College of Navarre, and that of the Jesuits, all put together, would not equal Trinity either in splendor or in size. This leads him to a pleasing display of affection towards that beloved place of his education, in comparison

with which all the wonders that attract his notice in foreign realms are considered as vile trash. *Quam ægre a vobis divellor! quam difficile jam alienas cogitationes admitto! Cras Italiam, postridie Germaniam cogitem, hodiè vestræ soli recordationi defixus immorabor; a vobis auspicatus sum, in vobis desinam. Suo præsidio Cœleste Numen vos protegat, inque sinus vestros copiam, concordiam, virtutem, sapientiam liberaliter infundat. Valete.*

By another letter,* dispatched from Constantinople, we learn that Barrow, after residing a few months in Paris, proceeded through the south of France to Genoa, and from thence to Florence, where he made good use of the liberty granted him of reading in the Grand Duke's library, and of inspecting 10,000 medals, which were under the care of Mr. Fitton, a learned Englishman, who had been invited by his Highness to take charge of the collection.

But whilst he was thus eagerly employed in the pursuit of knowlege, he became so straitened in pecuniary resources, that he must have returned instantly to England, had he not been relieved from this embarrassment by Mr. Stock,† a young merchant of London, who generously supplied him with money to prosecute his travels.

From visiting Rome, the great object of his ardent curiosity, he was deterred by news of the plague having burst out at Naples, and which, as he had anticipated, soon reached the Eternal City. In the perplexity caused by this circumstance, he heard of an English vessel bound

* This epistle is not published in Barrow's Opuscula, but is inserted in the Appendix to Ward's Lives of the Gresham Professors.

† To this gentleman he afterwards dedicated his edition of Euclid's Data.

for Constantinople, in the port of Leghorn, whither he immediately repaired, and set sail for the ancient capital of the east.

The ship in which he now embarked, and which was very superior to that in which he left the shores of England, soon encountered a rough gale, the ludicrous effects of which on the passengers at their dinner-table are well described in a copy of elegiacs inserted among his *Opuscula*.

He next touches on the beautiful countries by which they coasted: but an attack made on them in the Ionian Sea, by an Algerine corsair, forms a long episode in this poetic strain. The barbarian ran up boldly and grappled with their vessel, but met with so stout a resistance, that after a desperate and long struggle he was glad to sheer off, and leave them to pursue their voyage as conquerors.

> Nec tamen erigimus ventis afflanda secundis
> Carbasa suspensæ pallida signa fugæ.

Barrow exhibited great intrepidity in this engagement; proving that, although his quarrelsome propensities had ceased, his courage did not fail him. Dreading, as he observes, nothing more than slavery, the most terrible prospect for a noble mind, he stuck manfully to his gun, and contributed, no less by his efforts than his example, to the admirable resistance made by the brave captain and his crew. Dr. Pope relates, that when he asked him the question, why he did not go down into the hold, and leave the defence of the ship to those whom it concerned, his reply was; "*it concerned no one more than myself. I would rather have lost my life than have fallen into the hands of those merciless infidels.*" Hence there can be no

doubt but that his energetic lines to Liberty came warm from the heart:

> Nos urit justum decus, indignatio pungit
> Nobilis, et patriæ gloria sancta rapit;
> Almaque Libertas vitali charior aurâ:
> Libertas! bullit cor, animusque tumet; &c.

In prosecuting this strain, and enumerating all the evils which he would rather undergo than fall into the hands of the barbarians, he mentions *poverty; poverty* worse even than what he then bore—

> ——paupertas durior illâ
> Quam fero.

And it is no slight proof of the spirit, good conduct, and resources of this extraordinary man, that he was able, with such limited means, to visit so many distant countries, and in such times.

After the interruption occasioned by this engagement, they pursue their course near to the little island of Cerigo, which gives the poet an opportunity of adverting to the ancient opulence and glory of Peloponnesus: they refit their shattered vessel at Milo, and thence sailing through the Cyclades, of which the beautiful and now wretched Isle of Scio is selected for a particular description,

> Ubertate soli reliquas cultuque sorores,
> Ædibus, ingenio, moribus exsuperans;

they arrive at Smyrna, where our traveller experiences a very hospitable reception from Mr. Spencer Bretton, the English consul, whose excellent endowments both of mind and body he celebrates not only in the present elegy, but in an epitaph composed at his death. It would seem from

Barrow's account, that many relics of antiquity, which then threw an interest over this great commercial city, have since perished.

> Nunc quoque magnificæ jactas monumenta ruinæ,
> Splendoris testes relliquiasque tui;
> Saxorum cumulos, inscriptaque marmora claris
> Priscorum titulis, nominibusque ducum; &c.

No Grecian city at present exhibits so few remains of ancient art!

On the eighth day they again set sail, when a poetical contribution is levied on the islands in the northern part of the Ægean, on the shores of Troy, the Hellespont, Propontis, and Bosporus, until at length the imperial seat of the eastern Cæsars, usurped by Ottoman barbarians, comes full into view.

> ——attollunt septem fastigia turres,
> Et patet urbs longæ meta statuta* viæ.

At Constantinople Barrow met with a cordial reception from the English ambassador, Sir Thomas Bendish, and from one of the principal merchants, Sir Jonathan Dawes; with whom he afterwards kept up an intimate friendship and correspondence. He did not however forget his college, to the members of which he sent a long letter, together with a copy of hexameters, consisting of near a thousand verses, (though it is but a fragment,) on the religion of the Turks.

---

* It seems extraordinary that Barrow's own ear, certainly not an unmusical one, did not lead him to select the word *petita* in this passage; though the rule of prosody, forbidding a short vowel to remain so before *s* and another consonant, seems to have been totally unknown to him, as he violates it in a thousand instances.

In this letter he expresses great fear lest his friends should blame his long silence, declaring that, on his arrival at the eastern capital, his principal consideration was to determine what subject seemed most important, and how he might best pay the debt which he owed to his college. Accordingly he had essayed to throw into elegiacs the adventures of his voyage; and after a short breathing-time, had attempted to versify the information which he had collected concerning the manners and religion of the people among whom he was sojourning. It appears, however, that this was not his sole employment, since we find in his *Opuscula* an epitome of the Mahometan tenets in Latin; a treatise on the superstition of the Turks, in English; translated lists of Turkish words, of Turkish proverbs, of the officers of the seraglio, and those of the empire; together with an English version of a curious history written by Albert Bobovius, musician of the seraglio, relating to a conspiracy in the harem, and the death of the old sultana, grandmother of the reigning emperor. Nor did his labors end here: being now in the ancient see of St. Chrysostom, and animated by the *religio loci*, he diligently perused the whole writings of that most eloquent of the Fathers; whence probably he imbibed a portion of the noble eloquence which pervades those discourses with which he has enriched our literature, and advanced the interests of religion: so true is the opinion of Longinus, that the *sublime* itself may be propagated, and a kindred soul catch inspiration from the genius of some mighty predecessor.

Barrow next describes to his correspondents the political state of the Ottoman empire; and as he had already drawn a portrait of the French minister, he now with equal ability delineates the character of the Vizir Azem, or prime

minister of Turkey, then acting as viceroy under the reigning Sultan Mahomet IV. who had ascended the throne very young in 1649, after his father, the imbecile Ibrahim, had been strangled by the rebellious Janizaries. This vizir he describes as a man of uncommon energy, though almost a septuagenarian: he had been raised, as is not unusual in Turkey, from a very low station to the second place in the empire; and in the space of two years had, by his wise counsels and great achievements, restored the Ottoman throne to its pristine strength and glory. At this time he had persuaded the Sultan to move his head-quarters to Adrianople, in order to carry on war with greater vigor and alacrity against the kingdom of Transylvania. Barrow, having previously enumerated his conquests, deprecates the storm which seems to hang over Christendom, and rejoices in the diversion which is likely to be made by the great rebellion of Hassan Pasha of Aleppo, who is up in arms with a vast army, demanding, together with many other reforms, the heads of his enemies the vizir and mufti, from whose machinations he had himself narrowly escaped.

With regard to the Greek subjects of the Porte, it is said that nothing new had happened since the execution of their patriarch in the preceding year; an event which bears a curious resemblance to that act of fierce fanaticism which has occurred in our own days.

Parthenius, like his late unfortunate successor, was considered one of the best men who for a long time had occupied the patriarchal throne; but he was accused of holding correspondence with the Czar of Muscovy, of whom the Turks were extremely jealous, whilst the Greeks looked up to him as the supporter of their religion, and

the expected avenger of their bitter servitude. Very few people considered the patriarch guilty of this crime, but rather thought that it had been forged against him by some persons anxious to supplant him in his high office; since the ambition of the Greek priesthood is excessive even in their abject state. The vizir however, without paying any attention to the circumstances of the case, but rather wishing for an example to deter others from holding communication with enemies of the Mahometan faith, ordered the unfortunate prelate to be brought instantly into a public part of the city, where he was hanged up in his pontifical robes, and exposed for two days to public view.

The absurdities of the Greek religion are intentionally passed over by our traveller; but he notices that gay and festive disposition, which seems to have characterized the nation in all ages. He remarks that their festivals are the only religious ordinances which they observe with alacrity; and under the pressure of a most cruel slavery they retain a cheerful disposition: they sing; they dance; in a word, they *play the Greek* intirely.

At the conclusion of this interesting letter he pleads several excuses for having absented himself more than three years from his college; but soon afterwards, when he had disposed his affairs properly for his return, he proceeded by sea to Venice, where as soon as he had landed, the ship took fire, and was consumed with all its cargo. Whether Barrow kept any journal of his tour, besides the letters written to his college, we have no means to determine: if he did, we probably owe the loss of it to this conflagration; nor will that loss appear inconsiderable to him who rightly estimates the man, his native talents, his

zeal for knowlege, his keen perception of physical and moral beauty. He was no pedant, who pored into the dark recesses of antiquity until his eyes became blinded with its dust; but in him wisdom and learning were united, and enthusiasm was tempered with judgment: with such a guide therefore it would have been delightful to have retraced at greater length scenes of departed grandeur or of present prosperity, to have imbibed instruction from his reflexions on ages past, or from his remarks on the arts, literature, and manners of his own day.

Such loss however must after all be a source only of imaginary regret: we may feel real disappointment that the letters which he actually wrote were not composed in his own language. Excellent as they are, it can scarcely be doubted but that his narrative would have been at once more animated and comprehensive, had he rejected the Latin garb in which he has dressed it. It is impossible for a dead language to give that nice shade and color and effect to description, which genius loves to cast around it. There are many things which it cannot express through a defect of phraseology; and it is always accompanied by a certain labor of compilation which cramps the imagination, and indisposes the mind to the exertion of its faculties. In rejecting therefore his native tongue, Barrow acted like an enchanter, who should cast away his magic wand, when he would invest a scene with beauties not its own. Above all we may lament the taste which led him to compose *elegiacs* and *hexameters*, when he might, perhaps in higher and in holier strains, have anticipated that genius who in after ages departed from the same walls, traversed the same realms, and described the same scenes in those splendid stanzas which are his best passport to immortality.

The fault however was more that of the age than of the man. Milton himself fell into it, though he soon saw the propriety of stripping the stiff unpliant drapery of antiquity from off his young and beauteous muse. Admirable as his Latin poems are, who would save them all at the expense even of Lycidas, to say nothing of the inimitable Comus? Barrow however made ample amends for neglecting such poetic strains by the noble prose with which he has enriched our literature.

Having left Venice, he made the tour of Germany and Holland; returning to England, as he proposed, in 1659. The period being now arrived when the fellows of Trinity are obliged by their statutes to take holy orders, or to quit the college,* Barrow procured episcopal ordination from Bishop Brownrigg, and soon after the Restoration, in 1660, he was elected without competition to the Greek professorship, on the resignation of Mr. Widdrington. This appointment was earnestly recommended by Duport, who had greater pleasure in promoting the fortunes of this promising and favorite pupil, than in re-occupying a chair of which he had been unjustly deprived. In the inaugural oration made by the new professor on this occasion, he takes occasion to celebrate the most illustrious among his predecessors; Erasmus, Sir Thomas Smith, Sir John Cheke, Downes, and Creighton; whilst he speaks of Widdrington himself in a manner that may lead us to suppose him not unqualified for the offices to which parliamentary interest alone seemed to have raised him. But in describing his beloved tutor's character, disposition, and accomplishments, Barrow's genius seems to revel with

* Seven years after the degree of A.M.

delight; particularly when he contrasts that amiable person's *small stature* with his *gigantic acquirements*, in so playful and ingenious a manner, that I should deservedly incur the learned reader's reproaches if I did not give him an opportunity of perusing it in the margin.*

* Illustre vero agmen claudat haud postremus merito, quin ausim dicere primus, ut qui nemo hanc cathedram aut tenuit tamdiu, aut tantoperè decoravit, mihi perpetuo obsequio colendus, nec vobis minus omni honore suspiciendus, vir optimus, et oculorum licet judicio renuenti, etiam *maximus* Duportus. Exiguo quippe cortice obvolutus omnigenæ eruditionis nucleus, angusta capsulâ inclusus ingens thesaurus literarius; volumine parvo comprehensum quotquot sunt linguarum, artium et scientiarum compendium; tot Erasmorum, Budæorum, Stephanorum accurata epitome; cujus in modico corpore immensus animus habitat, giganteum versatur ingenium, omnes Athenæ hospitantur, tota quanta quanta est Græcia diversatur: quia nostra plerorumque ultima memoria Atlantem agens Græcarum literarum Academiæ decus humeris non magnis adeo quam validis sustentavit, et vèlut stella mole arcta, virtute diffusissima lucidissimis radiis universum mundum circumfulsit; a quo habet Anglia nostra, ne aliis gentibus literarum gloria cedat, nec suos Galliæ Scaligeros, Salmasios, Patavios, suos ve Belgio Heinsios, Grotios, Vossios quod invideat. Quis enim Græcas literas perspexit intimius? quis Latinas extulit purius vel copiosius? quis poëticam facultatem felicius coluit, et cœlestis Musæ diviniores raptus heroici carminis majestate propius adæquavit? quis tot unquam orationes habuit concinnas, lepidas, eruditas? aut dum tot annos, imo tot lustra, juventutem Academicam instituit, adeo grammaticam austeritatem critica varietate condivit, rhetorica venustate expolivit, amœna urbanitate temperavit? Quis denique tam fideli opera, tam indefesso labore, tam assidua diligentia, susceptam provinciam administravit, adeo quidem ut successoribus suis tam insigne exemplar sequi difficile fecerit, assequendi vero spem omnem præciderit, et ademerit potestatem? At quid ego loquacis linguæ insulsa temeritate tantas dotes minuo, tantis virtutibus detero, tanta merita obfusco, quæ (nisi loci hujus et temporis ratio silentium damnaret, nisi illius in vos magna merita, in literas

As Barrow began by praising the modern professors of Greek literature, he concludes with an eulogy on the ancient authors of it; commenting also on the obligations due from the Latin writers to that ingenious people, "who took captive the fierce conqueror, and introduced arts into rustic Latium." The only part of his speech derogatory to good taste, is that where he seeks unduly to depreciate his own merits, when justly intitled to that honest pride which is due to high deserts. Yet did we not know the depth and extent of Barrow's acquirements, we might be disposed even to credit his assertions on this head, when we find him soon afterwards complaining in the very same schools, that they had been utterly deserted, and his lectures given to empty benches. "There I sat," says he, "in the professorial chair, like Prometheus affixed to his solitary rock, or muttering Greek sentences to the naked walls, like an Attic owl driven out from the society of all the other birds in the air."* He next hints at the author

---

eximia, in meipsum infinita, etiam invito mihi verba extorsissent,) satius erat tacita admiratione fuisse veneratum? Quin vos evolvite scripta, recolite dicta, quæ autores interpretanti, elucidanti, conferenti, quæ prælegenti, et peroranti exciderunt, in memoriam revocate, ut ex profectu vestro magis discatis quam ab elogio meo tantum virum æstimare, cui similem professorem multa vobis non dabunt, parem paucissima invenient, majorem nulla unquam sæcula parient, nulla pepererunt.

* A passage in a letter of Archbishop Sancroft, when master of Emanuel Coll., dated Jan. 17th, 1663, will give us some idea of the low state of the *litteræ humaniores* about this time. "It would grieve you" (says he) "to hear of our public examinations; the Hebrew and Greek learning being out of fashion every where, and especially in the other colleges, where we are forced to seek our candidates for fellowships."—D'Oyly's Life of Sancroft, vol. i. p. 128.

whom he had selected for explanation by observing, " that he and his *Sophocles* had acted with an empty orchestra: that the poet could not procure a tritagonistes, nor a chorus; no, not even one of boys: that there was not a single person to accompany the singers, to applaud the dancers, or to interrupt the speakers; that if by chance a straggling freshman, or a shipwrecked soph was driven by wind or tide on those desert shores, he peeped in perhaps, but when he heard three words of tragic sound, he took instantly to his heels and ran away as from the cave of Polyphemus, even as if he were about to be devoured by a barbarous Greek."* This may serve to give the reader some idea of the state of learning at this time in the junior part of the university, as well as of the sarcastic style of this speech, which is called an *oratio sarcasmica,* and is on many accounts worthy of attentive perusal. In a passage of great beauty, he states the reasons which prompted him to select the tragedies of Sophocles for the subject of his lectures, and dilates on the superior excellence of that dramatic poet, whilst with great energy and severe sarcasm he investigates the causes that could produce so much apathy in a dissolute and degenerate age. The next question is; whom shall he substitute for the forsaken Sophocles? This gives him an opportunity of briefly characterising the most esteemed Greek authors, and of fixing on the great Stagyrite, who then held the literary world in chains, and who was probably at that time necessary for obtaining a degree. *Superest, ut in unum Aristotelem spes nostræ, velut in sacram anchoram, reclinent; ut ad Lycæum, ceu ad arcem Sophiæ munitissimam, portum*

* Our language here fails in expressing the words, " barbaro *Graculo.*"

studii certissimum, sanctissimam aram disciplinæ, confugiamus. Accordingly he proposes to explain his exoteric writings, and to begin with his rhetoric. Mr. A. Hill informs us that some friend, that is to himself, borrowed these Aristotelian lectures, and forgot to restore them.

Barrow's friends hoped that he would have been advanced to preferment by the government soon after the Restoration. It seems also that he himself considered such a distinction due to the sacrifices made by his family, and to his own loyalty; for the following distich, which he made on his disappointed hopes, is recorded, though not inserted in his Opuscula:*

> Te magis optavit redituram, Carole, nemo;
> Et sensit nemo te rediisse minus.

In 1661 he proceeded to the degree of Bachelor in Divinity, with three others of his college; and to this period, in all probability, the excellent *Oratio ad Clerum*, or Latin sermon, published in his Opuscula, must be referred. In July next year he was elected Gresham Professor of geometry, principally at the recommendation of Dr. Wilkins, who was then master of Trinity, and afterwards Bishop of Chester. In a Latin oration, delivered before his lectures, after passing a splendid but just encomium on Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the college, he proceeds to eulogise in a very handsome manner several of its professors, dwelling particularly on the great Sir Christo-

* He had written an Alcaic ode of 65 stanzas on the king's return, which, besides exhibiting the general inaccuracies of that age in metrical rhythm and nicety of construction, betrays bad taste in the unconscionable length to which it is spun out.

pher Wren* among the living, and his own amiable and learned predecessor, Mr. Lawrence Rooke, among the departed. In this same year he wrote an epithalamium in Greek verse on the marriage of King Charles and Queen Catherine; moreover, he refused a living of considerable value, because the condition annexed to it, of teaching the patron's son, had too much the appearance of a simoniacal contract. Whilst he continued at Gresham College, he not only discharged the duty of his own professorship with great diligence and universal approbation, but supplied the place of Dr. Pope in the astronomical chair during that gentleman's absence abroad. Among his lectures, were some on the projection of the sphere, and, as Mr. Sherburne says,† prepared for the press; but these also, having been lent to a friend, could never afterwards be recovered.

On the 20th of May, 1663, he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society, in the first choice made by the Council after the grant of their charter; and on the 15th of July following, when his excellent uncle was appointed Bishop of Sodor and Man, he preached the consecration sermon in King Henry the Seventh's Chapel. In this same year also the executors of Mr. Henry Lucas,‡ who had been M. P. for the university, proceeded, according to the directions of his will, to found a mathematical professorship at Cambridge; and Barrow obtained the first nomination to this

* He styles him "*prodigium olim pueri, nunc miraculum viri, imo dæmonium hominis.*" He seems to have always entertained a respect and friendship for this great man, to whom he addresses an epigram preserved in his *Opuscula*.

† Appendix to Manilius, p. 112.

‡ Mr. Robert Raworth and Mr. Thos. Buck.

chair at the instance of his staunch and zealous friend Dr. Wilkins. On the 14th of March, 1664, he made his inaugural speech in the public schools, wherein, after due tribute of praise paid to the founder of the professorship and his executors, he turns to his own case, and apologizes for having deserted the Greek and gone over to the Mathematical schools. All who are acquainted with Barrow's literary labors, must feel considerable surprise at the declaration, that although he never was *altogether averse* to philological pursuits, yet the whole bent of his mind, and his ardent affections, always lay towards philosophy:* the study of this he terms *a serious investigation of things*, whilst he considers literature, in comparison with it, merely as a childish hunting after words. He expresses therefore great delight in marching, as we might say, out of the *treadmill* of grammar (*è grammatico pistrino*) into the open palæstra of mathematical science; yet though he has thus emancipated himself from his literary fetters by this exchange of office, he professes a most ardent attachment to his university, as a place on which kings might look with envy; as a place where he anxiously desires to spend his days, and from which nothing but extreme necessity shall ever separate him. Indeed about this time, having resigned his charge of the Cottonian library, which he held on trial for a few months, and having also given up his chair at Gresham College, he retired to Cambridge, and there fixed his residence for the remainder of his life.

With regard to Barrow's sentiments on the subject of

* "Etenim sicuti nunquam a philologiâ prorsus abhorruerim, ita (ne dissimulem) philosophiam semper impensius adamavi; ut vocularum ludicrum aucupium morosè non despiciam, ita seriam rerum indaginem magis cordicitùs complector;" &c.

classical and mathematical pursuits, though there can be little doubt but that his predilections lay towards the latter, yet we must allow some latitude to his expressions, when we consider not only the apologetic nature of his speech, and the mode of lecturing in those days, which must have been much more irksome than at present from its necessary adaptation to a very juvenile audience; but the probable application of them to *verbal criticism*, a study pursued with very little zeal or success at that time, though carried to a high degree of perfection by succeeding scholars, with the great Bentley at their head. This species of knowlege, useful not only as the pioneer of literature, but as a great strengthener of the reasoning powers, Barrow did not possess; but he had a great, an almost unlimited acquaintance with the best classical authors, and the most esteemed fathers of the church: nor could he ever have meant to despise or undervalue those admirable sources whence he drew such constant and pure streams of eloquence and wisdom.*

In 1699 he composed his able expositions of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Decalogue, and the Sacraments, probably as exercises for a college preachership; and these, he observes,† so took up his thoughts, that he could not easily apply them to any other matter: yet in this same year he published his Lectures on Optics, which he dedicated to the executors of Mr. Lucas, as the first-fruits of

* This appears evident from one of his addresses to the academic youth: "Neque demum linguas negligatis licet, scientiarum claves et eruditionis vestibula; sine quibus ipsi nec doctos intelligere, nec indoctos potestis erudire, et sapientia vobis vel nulla vel infans sit oportet."—Opusc. p. 349.

† See note in Ward's Lives, &c. p. 161.

their Institution. These lectures, says Dr. Ward,* being sent to the learned Mr. James Gregorie, professor of mathematics at St. Andrew's, and perused by him, he gives the following character of the author in a letter to Mr. John Collins. "Mr. Barrow in his *Optics* showeth himself a most subtil geometer, so that I think him superior to any that ever I looked on. I long exceedingly to see his *geometrical lectures*, especially because I have some notions on that same subject by mee. I entreat you to send them to mee presently, as they come from the presse, for I esteem the author more than yee can easilie imagine." Nor were Barrow's mathematical abilities undervalued by that rare genius who so soon eclipsed them: for in one of his letters to Mr. John Collins, dated July 13, 1672,† Newton observes, in allusion probably to these *geometrical lectures;* "nor is your mathematical intelligence less grateful; for I am very glad that Dr. Barrow's book is abroad." Yet when this learned work, which was published in 1670, had been sometime before the world, and Barrow heard only of two persons who had read it through, viz. Mr. Slusius of Liege, and Mr. Gregory of Scotland, (though these two, says Mr. Hill, might be reckoned instead of thousands,) the little relish such things then met with, helped to loose him altogether from those speculations, and direct his attention more exclusively to theological studies. To these indeed his genius evidently tended, even perhaps when he himself was least aware of it;‡

* Lives of Gresham Professors, p. 161.

† See Nichols's Illustrations of Literature, vol. iv. p. 46.

‡ "The study of morality and divinity" (says Mr. A. Hill) "had always been so predominant with him, that when he commented on

to these the whole texture of his mind was subservient; and in this point of view we may admire the disposal of him by providence.

Never probably was religion at a lower ebb in the British dominions than when that profligate prince Charles II. who sat unawed on a throne formed, as it were, out of his father's scaffold, found the people so wearied of puritanical hypocrisy, presbyterian mortifications, and a thousand forms of unintelligible mysticism, that they were ready to plunge into the opposite vices of scepticism or infidelity, and to regard with complacency the dissolute morals of himself and his vile associates.* To denounce this wickedness in the most awful terms; to strike at guilt with fearless aim, whether exalted on high places, or lurking in obscure retreats; to delineate the native horrors and sad effects of vice; to develope the charms of virtue, and to inspire a love of it in the human heart; in short, to assist in building up the fallen buttresses and broken pillars of God's church on earth, was the high and holy task to which Barrow was called. In order, however, that he might collect his stupendous powers for the uninterrupted prosecution of it, he resigned his mathematical chair to that great luminary of science whose glory has never been obscured: next indeed to the credit which Isaac

---

Archimedes, he could not forbear to prefer and admire much more *Suarez* for his book *de Legibus;* and before his *Apollonius* I find written this divine ejaculation, 'Ο Θεὸς γεωμετρεῖ· Tu autem, Domine, quantus es geometra!" &c.

* The picture is drawn very vividly in many of Barrow's sermons, and in his Latin speeches delivered before the university. See in particular his oration at a public commencement: Opuscula, p. 343.

Barrow derives from the exertion of his own vast powers in the augmentation of scientific philosophy, is that which is due to him for his early notice of Isaac Newton;* to whom he was the constant patron and the friend, as well as the precursor.

Since Barrow may be looked on as the promoter of a great alteration in the course of studies pursued at Cambridge, a concise account of those studies previous to his time, will perhaps not be thought out of place here.

This university, like its sister establishment, was at its first institution little more than a large school of ecclesiastics, where the rudiments of grammar and of such science as was then in vogue, were taught, long before the invention of printing, or the blessings of the Reformation had supplied means of useful knowlege or general instruction. Cambridge is indebted to a few monks, sent by the Abbot of Crowland from his manor of Cottenham, in the beginning of the twelfth century, for an advanced state of

* He was not only the first to remark the merit of our great philosopher, but he submitted to his inspection and revision many of his own excellent mathematical works, wrote of him in the highest terms to his learned correspondents, and resigned to him the Lucasian professorship in Nov. 1669. In a letter to Mr. John Collins, of July 20th, 1669, he acquaints him that a friend of his had brought him some papers, wherein he had set down "*methods of calculating the dimensions of magnitudes like that of Mr. Mercator for the hyperbola, but very general; as also of resolving equations;*" which he promises to send him. And accordingly he did so, as appears from another letter dated the 31st of that month. And in a third letter of the 20th of August following he says, "*I am glad my friend's papers give you so much satisfaction; his name is Mr. Newton, a fellow of our college, and very young, being but the second year Master of Arts; but of an extraordinary genius and proficiency in these things.*"—See Ward's Lives, p. 161, note.

learning, when the era of its introduction is considered. These professors being "thoroughly furnished," according to the quaint idiom of Fuller, "in philosophy and other primitive sciences," taught publicly in a spacious barn,* until the number of students that came to their lectures rendered separate places of tuition necessary. Their plan of study was drawn from the university of Orleans, comprising grammar and rhetoric on the foundation of Priscian, Aristotle, Tully, and Quintilian, with their commentators: theology also was expounded both to scholars and to the people on Sundays and festivals; so that persons flocked to these fountains of literature, thus thrown open, with zeal and numbers proportionate to that abstinence from instruction to which they had been long subjected.

Such was the primitive state of our academical institutions. Those statutable privileges and liberal endowments which now distinguish us, were then unknown; but the use of an academical habit, as well as the power of conferring degrees in the several faculties, may be traced back to the earliest periods. Even after the foundation of colleges and halls, the strange intermixture of monastic orders with literary bodies, and the early age at which students were admitted at the university, contributed not only to create strife and confusion, but to retard the advancement of science, and to retain the errors of superstitious bigotry. The time allotted to academical studies, before admission to each degree, seems to have been always the same as it is at the present day; but the duties of university officers

* This barn is thought still to exist under the appellation of Pythagoras's school: it belongs to Merton College, Oxford, and has lately been turned into a dwelling-house: the arches of its windows are those of the early Norman style.

appear to have undergone considerable alterations. According to the old statutes, three public lecturers were appointed by the senate to impart that instruction which the youth now receive from their college tutors. These lecturers were selected annually from the Regent Masters of Arts, to read publicly in the schools, to the students of the first and second years, *humanity;* to those of the second year, *dialectics* also, or *logic;* to those of the third, conjointly with the incepting bachelors of arts, *philosophy:* and for this office each reader received a stipend of £1. 6*s.* 8*d.* The times and manner of the disputations, &c. were regulated by the proctors.

The university studies, however, did not then, as now, cease with the degree of A.B. No person was admitted to that of A.M. unless he had attended public lectures, for three years after his determination, in Aristotle's philosophy, and had kept his regular acts and opponencies in the schools. Lectures also in theology, together with disputations, and sermons both in English and Latin, were indispensible for the superior degrees of B.D. and D.D. By one of the old statutes, we learn that a bachelor of arts was permitted to incept in *grammar,* if he had duly attended grammatical lectures in the works of Priscian, had performed certain exercises, and been examined by three masters of arts. After these ceremonies, and an affidavit made that he would attend additional lectures in Priscian for the space of one year, he was presented for admission to the proctors by the Magister Grammaticæ, or, in his absence, by the Magister Glomeriæ, an official personage who is a *crux* to antiquarians.

Some time before the Reformation, when the ordinary studies of the place began to fall into neglect, a new ordi-

nance was introduced into the statute book,* for the appointment of a course of lectures, to which all students were *admitted*, but which all Bachelors of Arts were *obliged* to attend: their subjects were, for the first year arithmetic and music; for the second, geometry and perspective; and for the third, astronomy. A grace also was passed in 1528 for substituting grammar in the place of philosophy, at the public disputations held every Friday during term.

At this time also a barbarous Latin jargon was the vehicle of written, and in great measure of oral instruction also, being spoken in public assemblies, in the schools, in the senate-house, and even in private colleges. The highest aim of mathematical knowlege was the investigation of unprofitable secrets, and the cultivation of judicial astrology: even Aristotle himself, that idol of scholastic disputants, was studied only through the mist of his translators and commentators, the number of whom became multiplied to such a degree, that Patricius reckons up near 12,000 about the end of the 16th century.

Such was the general state of learning in our universities, when the blessed light of the Reformation burst through the gloom which hung over the avenues of real knowlege. That great event was accompanied by the revival of a purer literature, which was quickly established by a phalanx of scholars at Cambridge; and then the absurdities of that scholastic theology, which had so long enslaved the intellect of mankind, were successfully combated; the best authors of Greece and Rome were taught and illustrated by critical and philological erudition; whilst

* See Statuta Antiq. p. 65.

the archives of Christianity were purified under their auspices, and truth was re-instated on the throne of her supremacy. From the dawn of science in the reign of Henry VIII., the day-spring of knowlege brightened throughout that of his son and successor. At the accession of Queen Mary indeed, ignorance and superstition for a time resumed their sway, and many of the great restorers of learning felt the severity of that fate which threw them on times, when literature rose or fell with court factions, or changed according to the disposition of princes and the alteration of religion.

True religion however, and knowlege, its best companion, revived with fresh lustre under the auspices of Elizabeth and the direction of her sage counsellor Burleigh, a statesman who had happily imbibed excellent principles during his residence at St. John's College; a seminary which about this time acquired that distinguished reputation for theological attainments which it has so nobly supported through succeeding generations.*

In that happy era, the statutes which prevail at this day in the university, were, after diligent revisions and amendments, finally established. We may pass over that part of them which relates to its incorporation, as our business is with those alone which relate to the advancement of a learned and religious education. These weighty interests indeed had been very successfully attended to in the statutes of Henry VIII. and of his amiable but short-lived successor; wherein we find that the theological professor

* Barrow alludes to this well-deserved fame of his rival college, when speaking of Mr. H. Lucas, who had been a member of St. John's. See Opusc. p. 79.

was ordered to read publicly the scriptures only; the philosophical lecturer was confined to the *problemata, moralia,* or *politica* of Aristotle, to Pliny, and to Plato: the arithmetic of Tunstall and Cardan, together with Euclid's geometry, was selected for the professor of mathematics: the *elenchi* of Aristotle, the *topica* of Cicero, and the works of Quintilian, for the reader in rhetoric and logic; whilst the Greek professor was obliged to expound the writings of Homer, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Euripides, or any other of the purest classical authors. The order of study prescribed to the students was as follows:

To the first year arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and geography: to the second, logic; and to the third and fourth, philosophy. During this course, each candidate for the degree of A.B. was obliged to keep two opponencies and two acts in the public schools, as well as to undergo the customary examination.

An extended progress in the above named sciences, together with public disputations, as well as an assiduous attendance on those held by Masters of Arts during three years, was exacted from all Bachelors of Arts before they proceeded to their next degree; neither was the Master who aspired to a higher degree of academical dignity, permitted to remain idle: he was remanded to the study of theology for the next five years, with a daily attendance on the Hebrew lecture, besides his acts, opponencies, sermon, and clerum, which were all demanded before he could take his degree of B.D. If he aimed at the highest step, that of Doctor in Divinity, (which at this time was held in little less estimation than a patent of nobility,) he was obliged to attend daily the divinity lectures, during four years of probation, besides a variety of other exer-

cises: even after this last degree, *post tot naufragia, pericula,* and *examina,* (as the old statute book expresses it,) he was under the necessity of preaching a Latin sermon, and of holding an annual disputation in the schools "on some dubious and subtile question," if he resided in the University.

In the last body of statutes given to the university by Queen Elizabeth, A. D. 1570, the principal alterations therein made relate only to discipline; none are observable in those connected with the studies of the youth, and very few with those of superior standing. The disputations in the Sophs Schools were arranged almost after the same manner in which they now exist, and a Moderator Scholæ, together with two Examiners of the Questionists, was appointed; but a more correct idea may be formed of the method of study pursued at this period, from an extract taken out of a scarce work published at Cambridge, in the year 1769, from a vellum MS. intitled "a projecte contayninge the state, order, and manner of government of the University of Cambridge, as now it is to be seen in the three and fortieth yeare of the Raigne of our Most Gracious and Soveraigne Lady Queen Elizabeth." After a full account of all the officers of the University, we come to the article of "Lecturers for the instruction of the younger sort of scholars, as namely,

One Rethoricke Lecturer. — To read the precepts of Rethoricke in one of the common scholes, in such sorte as is fit for younge scholers at their first coming to the University.

One Logic Reader. — To teach the use of Logicke by publique readeing in the scholes unto such as are of the 2nd and 3rd years continuance.

One Philosophie Reader. { To read a Philosophie Lecture, either of morale, politique, or natural philosophie, unto the Sophisters and Bacchelers of Arte, thereunto resorting by statute.

One Mathematical Reader. { To read the arte of Arithmeticke, of Geometrie, of Cosmograpie, or of Astronomy, in such sort as is fit for his auditory, being also of Sophisters and Bacchelers of Arte."

These four lecturers still exist under the title of Barnaby Lecturers, whose office was no sinecure in the times of which we are treating, although it has now lapsed into the official duties of the college tutor. Similar instructions to those above quoted are given for the direction of Readers in Divinity, Hebrew, Greek, Civil Law, and Medicine, instituted by King Henry VIII., and who are called "Lecturers for the increase of knowlege in the more ancient students," as well as the Divinity Reader, and an University Preacher, who is ordered "to preache at Paule's Cross, and at other places thereunto named and appointed:" both of these offices were founded by Lady Margaret, mother of King Henry VII. Although an evident improvement had now taken place in academical studies and discipline, and although the pursuits of science were, in a great measure, detached from that scholastic method which had so long held reason in chains, still there was too much time and labor expended in subtile questions and vain disputations, held more for the sake of confuting an antagonist and the gratification of literary vanity, than for the promotion of real knowlege. The greatest philosophers, and the highest characters of the age, frequently indulged in the exercises of this palæstra

to a most preposterous extent; instigated no doubt by the applauses which were so lavishly poured on victorious combatants by admiring contemporaries. Haddon, in a letter to Dr. Cox, speaking of a public disputation held by Sir Thomas Smith at a Cambridge commencement, bursts out into the following rapturous exclamations: "Had he (Dr. Cox) been there, he would have heard another Socrates; that he caught the forward disputants, as it were, in a net with his questions; and that he concluded the most profound cases of philosophy with great gravity and deep knowlege."

At length a higher order of philosophy arose, and the dogmas of the Divine Doctors, and of the Irrefragable Doctors, soon vanished into air. The great Bacon commenced his academical career about the end of the sixteenth century; his intellect instantly discovered all the imperfections of the reigning Aristotelian system of philosophy, together with their causes; nor did his comprehensive mind rest till he had effected that change which placed knowlege on the firmest foundations. At a very early age, this extraordinary man was heard to say "that his exceptions against that great philosopher (Aristotle) were founded not on the worthlessness of the author, to whom he would ever ascribe all high attributes, but on the unfruitfulness of the ways, being a philosophy only for disputations and contentions, but barren in the production of works for the benefit of the life of man." It was, however, easier for the genius of a Bacon to discover the errors of a system, than to remove the prejudices of its supporters; yet the power of truth, as must ever be the case, gradually prevailed; and about the middle of the seven-

teenth century the dogmas of the Aristotelian school gave way to the force of Inductive Philosophy.

The brightness, however, of this philosophy became again obscured for a time by an undue partiality which the system of Descartes, and his disciple Rohault, obtained; a system, which, although it corrected some errors, and amended some imperfections, rather dazzled the imagination by subtle hypotheses, than convinced the judgment by careful observation; which, admitting nothing to be true which was not evident, and referring that evidence to inward sensation, established principles dangerous equally to philosophy and religion. Its brilliant but fallacious doctrines held a most distinguished place in the schools of Europe, until Newton took up, extended and confirmed that more sober and sound method of philosophizing which Bacon had introduced. This immortal man removed at last the crazy superstructure of science from the weak foundation of hypothesis, and raised a more substantial edifice on the solid basis of experiment. Admitting nothing as a principle which could not be established by observation and experience, he drew his propositions from phænomena, and rendered them *general* by induction, entertaining no hypothesis at all except for the purpose of submitting it to experiment.

The way had been paved for this great change at Cambridge by the establishment of the Lucasian Professorship, A. D. 1663, the chair of which, as we have seen, was first dignified by the occupation of Barrow.

This great man was on all points opposed to the dogmas of the scholastics. Instead of considering, like them, that the soul was the only *place of ideas,* and that *thought* had

no communication with bodily organs, he entertained and openly avowed that opinion which the illustrious Locke expanded into his admirable essay, viz. that all our ideas flow into the mind through the various inlets of the senses. *Eorum enim, qui communiter apparent, effectuum notitia atque historia ultro otiosis et quasi nolentibus se ingerunt, per apertas sensuum fenestras ad animæ sedem penetrantes,* &c.* And as he opposed the fallacious subleties of logic, so did he endeavor to clear mathematical knowlege from the rubbish with which it had been long encumbered, and to form it into a system fit for the instruction of youth: to this end he published very early in his career improved editions of Euclid's Elements and Data; then his own excellent Lectures on Optics and Geometry; next an edition of the works of Archimedes and some other ancient mathematicians; and in 1683 the world at large was presented with those admirable *Mathematical Lectures* which he had delivered in the schools as Lucasian Professor,† and from which the era of mathematical science in Cambridge may be said to commence.‡

* Opuscula, p. 34.

† In the years 1664, 1665, 1667.

‡ The splendid discoveries indeed of Newton obscured the merits of his predecessors, as the blaze of the rising sun extinguishes the glimmering of the stars. From him therefore we are accustomed to date the commencement of our mathematical system at Cambridge. But as it has been erroneously supposed that the Newtonian doctrines made their way more rapidly in other places than in that which gave them birth, it may be worth while to give a little consideration to this point. It is not indeed to be supposed that they could be immediately adopted by the great mass of students; yet they were most sedulously propagated by persons qualified to judge of their merits; being illustrated and explained in very

The sentiments and instructions of this great philosopher on the subject of philosophy in general, and of mathematical science in particular, appear at large in an excellent speech which seems to have been spoken by him at a com-

learned publications, both by Whiston and by Saunderson, his immediate successor in the professorial chair. So early as 1694, the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, then an undergraduate, defended in the schools a question taken from Newton's Philosophy, and in three years afterwards he published a translation of Rohault's Physics, in which work many errors of the Cartesian system are corrected by annotational references to that of Newton. He also translated the Optics of this great philosopher, at his particular request, in 1707, the same year in which the appointment of Cotes, the friend and admirer of Newton, to the office of Plumian Professor, contributed to extend the popularity of his discoveries, and to establish that predominating influence which Mathematics and Natural Philosophy were now beginning to acquire in academical education.

Soon after this time public acts were commonly held in the Principia, from which subjects were taken, not only for disputation by the moderators, but for lectures by the college tutors. At length, about the middle of the last century, mathematical science began to occupy almost undivided attention at Cambridge, and to throw every other subject into the back-ground. The celebrated Waring, who filled the Lucasian chair in 1759, by his profound analytical researches infused a larger portion of pure mathematics into the public examinations, and of course into the preparatory studies of the youth. Those examinations had for some years taken a decidedly mathematical turn, and peculiar honorary distinctions were conferred on the questionists according to their proficiency in these abstruse sciences ; and thus Cambridge became almost exclusively a nursery for mathematicians, pushing philosophy itself to a vicious excess, and bending the most opposite dispositions to the torture of theorems and problems. It is not indeed denied that the genius of classical literature has, through all periods, distinguished this illustrious seat of science, from the days of Cheke and Ascham, of Milton

mencement of the Bachelors of Arts. It is evident also that the studies of the university were at this time undergoing a change, from the following passage: *Erga hanc Dei Opt. Max. pulcherrimam filiam quàm sincerè vos sitis*

and Gray, of Barrow and Pearce, of Bentley and Porson, to those of a living host of scholars, who still adorn its annals and extend its fame: but the cultivation of mathematical knowledge has been *exclusive*, whilst that of classical literature has been straitened and confined, nay, almost *fortuitous:* for although the establishment of scholarships, medals, and other rewards, for the encouragement of the *litteræ humaniores*, were instituted very soon after the cultivation of mathematical science became excessive, still these honorable distinctions formed, as it were, objects of emulation to a few, rather than stimulants of industry to the mass, and they have generally been the rewards of previous merit rather than of succeeding application.

At length, however, the force of prejudice, and the deep-rooted laws of custom, have given way to the enlightened spirit of the age, and Mathesis has admitted a partner to her throne; one too, *qualem decet esse sororem.* The youth at Cambridge are now examined in classical literature previously to their degree; are examined in it, conjointly with mathematics, for the degree of A. B.; and are allowed a competition for classical honors in a tripos, after that degree is completed.

If a pertinacious adherence to established system led the members of our university to oppose the intrusion of visionary theories, whose very projectors, were they established one day, would assail them the next; nay, if they even made Truth herself wait at the portal of their sanctuary until her claims for admission were investigated, they deserve the thanks of every one who wishes to keep the bulwarks of sound learning and religion firm on their foundations, admitting such alterations in the superstructure as time and circumstances may require.

But the authors of the change need not fear the overthrow of their venerable institutions: there is nothing to prevent the studies of abstract science from flourishing vigorously in conjunction with

*animati, vel propensus iste affectus indicare potest, quo nuperrimè mathematicas scientias veritati unicè charas dilectasque colere cæpistis. Macti estote, Academici, tam insigni et laudabili studio.**

We have seen that Barrow, after having introduced, and stimulated the academic world to pursue, an improved system of philosophical study, yielded his professorial chair to that friend whose occupation of it has rendered it one

---

those of classical and theological literature: by the list of Cambridge honors we find that the best classical scholars have invariably distinguished themselves in mathematical pursuits, and two of the most eminent prelates who now adorn the English Bench, obtained the highest honors in both departments. Besides, it is absurd to suppose that a short time, taken from the study of abstract science, and applied to other pursuits, can ever injure the talents, or diminish the acquirements of a mathematical genius: so far, otherwise, it will strengthen and increase them by operating as a species of mental relaxation, and may even prevent the bodily constitution from sinking, as it often does, under the pressure of intense application to one difficult and fatiguing study. And if it *does* diminish the quantity of science which has of late been acquired by the candidates for high academical honors, it will act equally and impartially, at the time, on *all*, nor will it prohibit any of them from ultimately arriving at the highest point of their ambition: it will never diminish the number of our Saundersons, our Coteses, and our Newtons; nay, even if it should have this effect, a lesser good would still be sacrificed to a greater; for an establishment like our university must look, not so much to the exhibition of a few splendid names on its annals, as to the general improvement of all the youth committed to its management: these are to be rendered, as far as possible, useful and respectable members of society; the natural bent of their studious inclinations is in a certain degree to be accommodated; and all excuses for indolence and apathy are to be removed.

* Opusc. p. 126.

of the highest honors that Science can bestow on her most favored sons. With respect to himself, he devoted his powerful mind and vast acquirements to the service of religion, whilst he adorned its doctrines by the purity and holiness of his life. He soon acquired the reputation of an admirable preacher; though Dr. Pope relates some curious scenes which occurred, as well by reason of his strange attire and attenuated aspect, (for he was not only worn down by study, but slovenly in his dress,) as by the detention of his congregation, and his discourses of an unconscionable length. In one instance, when he preached for Dr. Wilkins at St. Lawrence-Jewry, so uncouth and unpromising was his appearance, that the congregation scampered out of church before he could begin his sermon: the good doctor however, taking no notice of this disturbance, proceeded, named his text, and preached away to the two or three that were gathered, or rather left together; of which number it happened that Mr. Baxter, the eminent non-conformist, was one, who afterwards declared to Dr. Wilkins that he never listened to a better discourse: amongst those also that remained was a young man who appeared like an apprentice, or the foreman of a shop, and who pleased Barrow greatly by accosting him with these words of encouragement, as he came down from the pulpit: *Sir, be not dismayed, for I assure you 'twas a good sermon.* When several parishioners came to expostulate with Dr. Wilkins on his suffering such an *ignorant scandalous* person to have the use of his pulpit, he referred them to Mr. Baxter, who candidly praised the sermon as it deserved, declaring *that he could willingly have been an auditor all the day long.* Confounded and put to shame by this judgment from a person whom they acknowleged

as their superior, they soon confessed that they had not heard a word of the discourse which they thus abused, and began earnestly to entreat their rector that he would procure Dr. Barrow's services again, promising to make him amends by bringing their whole families to his sermon. All persons, however, had not the patience of the worthy non-conformist, as was evident when Barrow was preaching on a certain holiday at Westminster Abbey; for the servants of that church, who were then accustomed to show the waxen effigies of the kings and queens, between services on holidays, to crowds of the lower orders, perceiving the Doctor in the pulpit long after the hour was past, and fearing to lose that time in *hearing* which they thought could be so much more profitably employed in *receiving*, became so impatient, that they caused the organ to be struck up against him, and would not cease till they had blown him down. Can Dr. Pope however be credited, when he assures us that his *spittle-sermon* before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen occupied three hours and a half? One is almost tempted to suppose that the customary invitation to dinner had been forgotten, and that the preacher took this ingenious method of revenging himself for the neglect. Being asked on that occasion, when he came down from the pulpit, whether he was not tired, his reply is said to have been—"Yes indeed, I began to be weary with *standing* so long." He took infinite pains with his compositions, transcribing them over and over again; for he well knew the force of that Horatian precept, which says, *ludentis speciem dabit et torquebitur;* and that he generally pleases his readers most who has given himself the most trouble to please them. Amongst other methods which he took for infusing a spirit of eloquence into his

discourses, was that of copying out the finest passages of classical and ecclesiastical writers, particularly Demosthenes and Chrysostom; whence he formed a magazine of rich materials, from which he might draw out stores for all subjects. His manuscripts in Trinity College bear ample testimony to this practice, a very considerable portion of them being occupied by those *excerpta*. By such diligence he acquired that copious and majestic style which induced the illustrious Lord Chatham to recommend the study of Barrow's sermons to his still more illustrious son;* by this he also has acquired those profound views on theological subjects, which induced Warburton himself to declare that in reading Barrow he was obliged to *think*. His indefatigable habits of study, and his own appreciation of the fruits of it, are thus pleasantly enough described by Dr. Pope.† "All the while he continued with the Bishop of Salisbury I was a witness of his indefatigable study. At that time he applied himself wholly to divinity, having given a divorce to mathematics, and poetry, and the rest of the *belles lettres*, wherein he was profoundly versed, making it his chief, if not his only business, to write in defence of the church of England, and compose sermons, whereof he had great store, and I need not say, very good.

"We were once going from Salisbury to London, he in the coach with the Bishop, and I on horseback: as he was entering the coach, I perceived his pockets strutting out near half a foot, and said to him, *What have you got in your pockets?* He replied, *Sermons*. *Sermons*, said I;

* He read Barrow's Sermons at the desire of Lord Chatham, who thought them admirably adapted to furnish the *copia verborum*. Tomline's Life of Pitt, Vol. i. p. 13. 8vo.

† Life of Bishop Ward, p. 143.

give them to me; my boy shall carry them in his portmanteau, and ease you of that luggage. But, said he, *suppose your boy should be robbed? That's pleasant;* said I: *do you think there are persons padding on the road for sermons?—Why, what have you?* said he. *It may be five or six guineas. I hold my sermons at a greater rate, for they cost me much pains and time.—Well then,* said I, *if you'll secure my five or six guineas against lay-padders, I'll secure your sermons against ecclesiastical highwaymen.* This was agreed; he emptied his pockets, and filled my portmanteau with his divinity, and we had the good fortune to come safe to our journey's end, and to bring both our treasures to London." Dr. Pope farther informs us, "that he was unmercifully cruel to a lean carcass, not allowing it sufficient meat or sleep:" that "during the winter months, and some part of the rest, he rose before it was light, being never without a tinder-box;" and that he has known him frequently to rise after his first sleep, light and burn out his candle, and then return to bed before day.*

Soon after his resignation of the Lucasian professorship, Barrow's uncle, who had been translated to the see of St. Asaph, gave him a small *sinecure* in Wales, and Dr. Seth Ward, bishop of Salisbury, who highly esteemed his character, and delighted in his society, collated him to the prebend of Yatminster in his cathedral. Just before he received this piece of preferment, Dr. Pope heard him say, *I wish I had five hundred pounds.* He replied, *That's a great sum for a philosopher to desire; what would you do with so much? I would give it,* said he, *to my sister for a*

* Mr. Hill declares that he saw written with Barrow's own hand at the end of his *Apollonius,* April 14. *Intra hæc temporis interualla peractum hoc opus.* Maii 10.

portion, and that would procure her a good husband. This sum, a few months afterwards, he actually received for putting a new life into the *corps* of his prebend ;* after which he resigned it to Mr. Corker, one of the fellows of Trinity, who was succeeded in it by Dr. Colbatch. He also resigned his sinecure, the profits of which, as well as those of his stall, were always applied by him to charitable purposes: so much did his mind soar above the sordid love of gain.

In the year 1670 he had been created D.D. by royal mandate, and on the promotion of Dr. John Pearson to the see of Chester, Barrow attained the utmost height of his wishes, in the mastership of his college, on which he entered February 27, 1672, about four years after his old friend Dr. Duport had been restored to the bosom of Alma Mater as head of Magdalene. When the king advanced Barrow to this dignity, for which he was indebted neither to the cabals of party, nor to the caprice of fortune, his Majesty was pleased to observe, with great justness of remark, *that he had given it to the best scholar in his kingdom;* an opinion not founded altogether on common report; for the Doctor had been some time one of the court chaplains, and had on several occasions held conversations with the king, who good-humoredly called him an unfair preacher; since he so intirely exhausted his subject as to leave room for no one to come after him.

The patent for his mastership having been drawn up for

* A copy of the indenture made for this purpose between Dr. Barrow and Mr. Sergeant Strode, of Lewesion, in the county of Dorset, is preserved in Cole's Mss. Vol. xxix. p. 36. Barrow was installed May 16, 1671., and was the thirty-eighth prebendary from the foundation: the first was Wm. St. John, who died in 1297.

him, as it had been for some others, with a permission to marry, he had that clause erased, considering it contrary to the intent of the statutes, from which he desired no sort of dispensation. In truth he had determined to dedicate himself intirely to the interests of his college, which was to him, as Hector was to Helen, in place of all other relatives: so completely did he justify the sentiment of his old shipmate, the captain of the vessel in which he sailed from Leghorn; a jovial tar, with whom Barrow seems to have been a great favorite, and who used sometimes, when the wine circulated after dinner in the cabin, jocosely to pledge him in the name of his *mistress*, the college. The verses in which he alludes to this circumstance, when describing the honest captain's convivial qualities, are not among the worst of the composition.

Ah! quoties festo cum stridere mensa tumultu
Convivasque inter serpere multa salus
Cœperat, ille tui, dixit mihi, Cynthia cordis
Nulla nec imperium Delia mollis habet.
Collegium tibi pro domina est: age, pocula plena,
Pocula dilectæ sume dicata tuæ.
Sic pateram accipiens ut nunquam lætius ullam,
Plurima pro vestra vota salute fero.

No sooner was Barrow settled in his lodge, to the great joy not only of the fellows, but of the university and all lovers of learning, than he declined some allowances usually made to his predecessors; and, as Dr. Pope observes, to show his humility and care of the college revenue, "he remitted to them the charge of keeping a coach for his time, which they had done a long while before for other masters." How different was his conduct in this respect to that great scholar who afterwards occupied his place,

and whose avarice not less than his tyrannical disposition kept the Society in a state of tumult and misery for nearly half a century!

As there is one act which has above all others signalised Dr. Barrow's reign at Trinity, I shall offer no excuse for dwelling on it more at length. For some time a scheme had been agitated at Cambridge to erect a theatre like that with which Archbishop Sheldon had adorned the sister university; and which would have been better adapted to the disputations which were held on all public occasions within the walls of St. Mary's Church: also to provide a better room for the public library, which had considerably increased; and public schools more suitable to the convenience and dignity of the university. As similar projects are at this very time in agitation, and plans from some of the most eminent architects of the day have been actually procured for the erection of a new library, &c. and as the reader may not dislike to compare them with the ideas entertained by our ancestors on such a subject, I have extracted the following passage from an oration spoken by Dr. Barrow at a public commencement, which from internal evidence seems to have taken place in July 1675. *Hisce nimirum præludiis ad illa viam sternimus, spem erigimus, animosque comparamus augustiora nostræ Reip: incrementa; Theatrum utique quod disputantium jurgiis hoc templum exoneret, et quò sannionum ineptiæ relegentur; Bibliothecam, quæ supellectilem nostram librariam, haud sanè curtam, aptè capiat, et quam tot optimi auctores laxius atque liberiùs incolant, tam arcto limite minus æstuantes; Scholas denique publicas, illustris nostræ Reip: amplitudine dignas, quibusque pulcherrimam et suavissimam istam Germanam nostram,*

*ut mentis indole plurimum referimus, ita vultûs specie propius attingamus.** In the preceding month of April a grace had passed the Senate to appoint a syndicate, consisting of the Vice-chancellor, himself, Dr. Duport, and fourteen other heads or Masters of Arts, to take this plan into consideration conjointly with a legacy left by Dr. Laney, the deceased Bishop of Ely, in order to promote it, on condition that it was begun within one year after his death.† Barrow, with his friend Duport, was convinced that this great work might be effected by means of a *subscription*, if the university were not wanting to itself; but he was unable to infuse a proper portion of his own spirit into others: the scheme failed; and it was left for a future age to show a better spirit, and perhaps a better taste, in the erection of that elegant senate-house which now adorns our university.‡

Dr. Barrow however, though baffled in this laudable enterprise, was resolved to show the practicability of his scheme, by adding a building of equal beauty and extent to his own college, among the members of which he found greater liberality, and a more just appreciation of his designs. "Indeed," (says Mr. A. Hill,) "it were a disrespect to his college to doubt that where he had spent so much time, and obliged so many persons, he should not be most welcome. They knew as his power increased, the effects of his goodness would do so too; and the senior fellows so well understood and esteemed him, that with

* Opusc. p. 346.

† Univ. Reg. for 1675.

‡ This was built about fifty years afterwards, under the direction of that eminent architect, Sir James Burrowes, Master of Caius College.

good will and joy they received a master younger than any of themselves." Accordingly he projected a new and spacious library, and wrote with his own hand an immense number of letters to the most wealthy and influential persons connected with the college;* with whom he was so successful, that he was enabled to lay the foundation, though unhappily he did not live to see the completion, of that splendid edifice which adorns the western side of Neville's Court, and is one of the architectural glories of his friend Sir Christopher Wren. Dr. Duport having generously given 200*l.* towards this noble undertaking, the good feelings of the master led him to consent that the name of his old tutor should stand first on the list of subscribers, even before his own.† The letters written on this occasion by Dr. Barrow are said to have been models of composition for their elegance of style and variety of expression. He also took the trouble of sending *answers* to those who had thus seconded his views; and it is a pity that the hint given by Mr. A. Hill was not taken, and those autographs returned by their possessors, to be kept in the college archives.

On the 9th of November 1765, Dr. Barrow entered on the office of vice-chancellor. The Latin oration which he delivered, according to custom, on that occasion, contains

---

* What a contrast is here between Barrow and that great but tyrannical character, the *glory* and *disgrace* of literature, alluded to above, who almost robbed his fellows when he, as it were, forced them to contribute their whole year's income towards the fitting up of the chapel. See Dr. Monk's interesting Memoir, p. 162.

† Duport left his books at his decease to this library. See the interesting Memoir of him by Dr. Monk, in the Mus. Crit. Vol. ii. p. 697.

nothing of particular moment or interest, except that in the exordium he seems to give a just and true account of his own inoffensive, amiable, retiring disposition, when he urges it as a reason why he is unversed in public business, and unfit to handle the reins of authority. He adverts also to the peculiar difficulties attending every kind of government in those times of lax discipline, rebellious spirit, dissolute habits, and extreme licentiousness; drawing a vivid picture of the state of things, and earnestly requesting the assistance of his brother heads in repressing any examples of vicious conduct that might have crept into the university.

We find however, from a very beautiful speech made when he laid down his office, that he passed through it without encountering any of those unpleasant circumstances which he had anticipated; but he expresses no small delight in casting aside the trappings of authority, and regaining his beloved tranquillity in a more private station. *Hujus ingruentis lætitiæ causas nihil opus est exponere: quis enim portum non hilaris ingreditur? quis sibi se restitutum non lætabundus excipit? quem non delectet eximi jugo, vel emancipari servitute, tot dominis addicta, quorum tam difficile sit exequi placita, quam sententias conciliare? quis invitâ Minervâ susceptum onus non animo adlubescente deponat? . . . . quis demum a fervido rerum æstu in amœnam umbram, ab obstreperis litibus in tranquillam pacem, ab alienis importunis negotiis ad sua jucunda studia regresso sibi non impensè gratuletur?* Hence the source of his joy: but he adds, that there is a grief also, which he experiences, and which arises from unpropitious fate not having allowed him to perform any act worthy of himself or of the university;

from the necessity of his going off the stage more like to the miserable Galba, than to the admirable Vespasian; wherein he probably alludes, in as gentle a manner as possible, to the failure of his scheme in the affair of the theatre.

Though liberated from the fatigues of public business, Barrow did not spare his mental labor; but set himself assiduously to work on that admirable treatise respecting Papal Supremacy, which alone would have established his reputation, and set him at the head of controversial writers. The pains which he took with this noble tract were immense; and the state of his manuscripts in Trinity College Library shows that probably no piece was ever composed more studiously, digested more carefully, or supported by more numerous and powerful authorities. "He understood Popery," as Mr. Hill his biographer rightly observes, "both at home and abroad: he had narrowly observed it militant in England, triumphant in Italy, disguised in France: he had earlier apprehensions, than most others, of the approaching danger, and would have appeared with the forwardest in a needful time."

Barrow's opinion of Popery, of its degrading ordinances, and of the evils to which they lead, is expressed with uncommon force and severity in the copy of hexameters which he sent to his college from Paris: nor can there be any doubt that a man like him, who never eagerly coveted the splendors of rank, or the advantages of wealth, would willingly have risked, or cheerfully resigned, all earthly possessions when his conscience demanded the sacrifice. Unfortunately for the University and mankind at large, his life was not protracted long enough to afford him this trial of his faith and constancy. Being invited to preach the Passion Sermon on the 13th of April, 1677, at Guild-

hall, he never preached but once more; for he fell sick of a fever, which carried him off on the 4th of May following: thus the last public act of a life spent in constant preparation for eternity, was one of the highest duties in his sacred profession: death approached him when he was in the maturity of his manhood, and at the height of his worldly ambition; but approached without his terrors; for he found him like a vigilant sentinel ready at his post, and only took away from him what is frail and transient, to establish what is permanent and real. His latter end is thus feelingly described by Dr. Pope: "The last time he was in London, whither he came, as it is customary, to the election of Westminster scholars, he went to Knightsbridge to give the Bishop of Salisbury a visit, and then made me engage my word to come to him at Trinity College immediately after the Michaelmas ensuing. I cannot express the rapture of joy I was in, having, as I thought, so near a prospect of his charming and instructive conversation: I fancied it would be a heaven on earth; for he was immensely rich in learning, and very liberal and communicative of it, delighting in nothing more than to impart to others, if they desired it, whatever he had attained by much time and study: but of a sudden all my hopes vanished, and were melted like snow before the sun. Some few days after he came again to Knightsbridge, and sate down to dinner; but I observed he did not eat: whereupon I asked him, how it was with him. He answered that he had a slight indisposition hanging about him, with which he had struggled two or three days, and that he hoped by *fasting* and *opium* to get it off, as he had removed another and more dangerous sickness at Constantinople some years before. But these remedies availed him not: his malady proved, in the event, an inward, malig-

nant, and insuperable fever, of which he died May 4, 1677, in the 47th year of his age, in mean lodgings, at a sadler's, near *Charing Cross*, which he had used for seve ral years: for though his condition was much bettered by his obtaining the mastership of Trinity College, yet that had no bad influence on his morals; he still continued the same humble person, and could not be prevailed upon to take more reputable lodgings. I may truly say, *Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit; Nulli flebilior quam mihi.*"

The mortal remains of this illustrious man were deposited in the south wing of Westminster Abbey near the western wall, where his friends erected a marble monument to his memory, with a bust on the top, and the following inscription in front, written by his excellent friend Dr. John Mapletoft, one of the Professors of Gresham College.

ISAACUS BARROW,

S. T. P. REGI CAROLO II. A SACRIS.

Vir prope divinus, et vere magnus, si quid magni habent
Pietas, probitas, fides, summa eruditio, par modestia,
Mores sanctissimi undequaque et suavissimi.
Geometriæ Professor Londini Greshamensis,
Græcæ Linguæ, et Matheseos apud Cantabrigienses suos.
Cathedras omnes, ecclesiam, gentem ornavit.
Collegium S. S. Trinitatis Præses illustravit,
Jactis bibliothecæ vere regiæ fundamentis auxit.
Opes, honores, et universum vitæ ambitum,
Ad majora natus, non contempsit, sed reliquit seculo.
Deum, quem a teneris colnit, cum primis imitatus est
Paucissimis egendo, benefaciendo quam plurimis,
Etiam posteris, quibus vel mortuus concionari non desinit.
Cætera, et pene majora ex scriptis peti possunt.
Abi, Lector, et æmulare.
Obiit IV. die Maii, ann. Dom. MDCLXXVII
Ætat. suæ XLVII.
Monumentum hoc Amici posuere.

"In this epitaph," as Mr. A. Hill observes, "his much esteemed friend Dr. Mapletoft doth truly describe him: his picture was never made from the life, and the effigy on his tomb doth little resemble him." Dr. Ward however contradicts this account so far as to say, that although Barrow never could be prevailed on to sit for his picture, some friends found means to get it taken without his knowlege, whilst they engaged his attention in discourse. "He was in person," says Mr. Hill, "of the lesser size, and lean; of extraordinary strength; of a fair and calm complexion, very sensible of the cold; his eyes grey, clear, and somewhat short-sighted; his hair of a light auburn, very fine and curling. He is well represented by the figure of Marcus Brutus on his denarii." If the likeness prefixed to the first edition of Barrow's works by his friend Archbishop Tillotson, be correct, we see that penetrating sagacity of intellect and that amiable spirit of goodness combined, which so eminently distinguished the original. If it be not so, what cause has posterity for regret, whilst the mind of the man may be so accurately traced in the indelible record of his glorious writings?

I can in truth delare, that in no human character which I ever investigated, have I discovered such minute, I may say imperceptible traces of vice, or such a pervading love of virtue, as in that of Isaac Barrow. Those who knew him best, bear the most ample testimony to his almost faultless disposition; and Dr. Pope, who had a long and very intimate acquaintance with him, need not be discredited, when he affirms that he can find no fault to allege against him, but that he was a little too long in his sermons. Yet in those sermons what a rich legacy has he left to his countrymen! What an unbounded command over our language is there displayed! what a va-

rious and vigorous style! what felicities of expression, what beauties of imagery, and what an affluence of noble sentiments! Again, what tender and persuasive earnestness do we discover! what soul-stirring exhortation! what powerful denunciation! what bright views of religion, and what passages of intense sublimity!* So that he who has not perused these writings may be said not to know the power of his mother-tongue; or to be like the possessor of a field, who is unacquainted with a mine of richest ore that lies beneath its surface. Barrow's discourses are very different from those of Sherlock, but equally good in their kind: they are not so critically correct—so logical in argument—so accurate in arrangement—so definite in terms—so free from repetitions, or even from imperfections: for the very sublimity of Barrow's mind, the vast extent of his knowlege, and the abundant power of his imagination, sometimes hurry him on towards a faulty excess. He does not always stay to analyse his thoughts, to weigh scrupulously his modes of expression, or to distinguish accurately between the heads and propositions of his discourses; but if those discourses be not always well arranged, they are the product of an extraordinary mind; they are the out-pourings of a strong and capacious intellect; exuberant streams, or rather torrents, of eloquence and sound theology sent forth, *tanquam ex cathedra*, until the very powers of thought and the varieties of language seem to be exhausted. It may also be observed that the faults of Barrow's composition are much more apparent to a person who reads his sermons consecutively, than to him who takes up a single one for casual perusal. When a man

* I will only refer the reader to the close of the first sermon, for proof of his Miltonic sublimity.

writes as he did, not for publication, but for preaching, and for the inculcation of sound principles into an *audience*, repetitions may be necessary, tautology allowed. But if to Barrow's eloquence we add the splendor of his moral character, a studious and blameless youth, a diligent and useful manhood, principles which no power or flattery could shake, freedom from the love of lucre, gratitude to friends, charity and condescension to all below him, and humility, which was doubly meritorious in so highly gifted a mind; finally, if to such graces and endowments we subjoin his sound sense, his wisdom, his foresight, and knowlege of mankind, where shall we look for his superior?*

And even in this world he gathered the blessed fruits of all these natural and acquired virtues. No one seems to have really enjoyed life more than Barrow. He was the delight of society, and men took a pleasure in returning to his bosom a portion of that happiness which they derived from his company. He seems actually to have had no enemies, no vexations. Though he continued steady in his principles through the worst of times, yet so upright was his conduct, so prudent were his measures, so peaceable was his disposition, and so commanding were his talents, that faction herself smoothed her ruffled brow when he appeared; and calumny never once assailed the purity of his fame.† Yet though he was too humble to grasp at

* He came, says Archbishop Tillotson (in the preface to his works), as near as is possible for humane frailty to doe, to the perfect idea of St. James his *perfect man*.

† If I could hear (says Mr. A. Hill) of an accusation, that I might vindicate our friend's fame, it would take off from the flatness of my expression; or a well-managed faction, under the name of zeal, for or against the church, would show well in story: but I have no shadows to set off my piece.

an inordinate share of human goods, too wise to aspire after a splendid dependence, too gentle to struggle with a jostling crowd, all things were his: and when we contrast the overflowing joy of Barrow's life with the feverish state of him who is an ambitious candidate for this world's glories, how strongly do we perceive the fulfilment of that promise in which it is declared, *the meek shall inherit the earth.*

To collect farther testimonies to the excellence of his talents, his writings, and his character, would be a superfluous labor :* if his works be perused, they will speak for themselves and for their author. A few of his opinions however may be recorded, whether it be to afford instruction, or to gratify curiosity.

He is said to have been a great enemy to those pieces that were written for theatrical representation in his days; thinking, and not without reason, that they were a principal cause of the licentiousness then so prevalent: his own wit was pure and peaceable; and as for satires, he wrote none.

Notwithstanding his extensive range in the field of literature, science, and philosophy, he gave it as his opinion, (and a very sound one it is,) that *general scholars* please themselves most, but those who prosecute particular subjects do more service to the community.

His favorite authors appear to have been Sophocles, Demosthenes, and Aristotle, among the Greek classics; Chrysostom among the Fathers; and Ovid among the Latin poets. "The greater part of his poems," says Dr. Pope,

* The reader may find some in the Bibliotheque Universelle, T. iii. p. 325: in the preface to Pemberton's View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy: in Archbishop Tillotson's preface to his works; &c.

" were written in hexameter and pentameter verses, after the manner of Ovid, whom he had in great esteem, preferring him even before the divine Virgil. I have heard him say that he believed Virgil could not have made the Metamorphosis so well as Ovid has: concerning which there have been betwixt us several sharp, but not bitter disputes; for herein I confess I differed from him, though we were, as to all other things, generally speaking, of the same mind, as Horace says of his friend Fuscus Aristius and himself:

> ——— hac in re scilicet una
> Multum dissimiles; ad cætera pene gemelli
> Fraternis animis."

In a very excellent speech which Barrow made to the students of Trinity College on his appointment to the Humanity Lecture,* he fully confirms this statement of Dr. Pope, when he gives the reasons for selecting Ovid as the subject of his lectures:—

"Ex omni choro Authorum, quem unà legeremus, segregavi Ovidium. Torvum enim illud et morosum Virgilianæ majestatis reveriti, incertum et intricatum *Papiniani* tumoris abominati sumus. Et *Horatium*, sæpè suaviter nequam, dictisque elegantibus et præceptis non raro lasciviæ ac intemperantiæ virus admiscentem, respuimus. Quin et ipsum præterire ausi sumus *Ciceronem*, subinde dum largo flumine verborum exundat, rebus et sensibus parcum. Quidni igitur *Ovidium* in manus sumerem? *Ovidium* dixi, imò potius Genium quendam ingenii ac eloquentiæ in humana

* It is intitled Pro Lectore Human. oratio. The office, I believe, answers to that of the present Latin Lecturer; though the duties have necessarily altered with the times.

specie ludentem: cujus versiculos nec mortalis aliqua cura finxisse, nec studium expressisse, neque ars concinnâsse, sed vel natura ipsa sponte effudisse, aut divinior quædam Musa dictâsse videatur. *Ovidium*, lactea ubertate eloquii, facili proprietate verborum, sincera puritate sermonis, sententiarum apposito lepore, utilique acumine, æquali calore, et continuo styli spiritu cuivis conferendum," &c.

After this he concludes with some admirable instructions for themes, and several other species of composition.

Almost all the worldly goods which Barrow left behind him consisted in his books; but these were so well chosen, that they sold for more than they cost. He published only two sermons in his life-time; the rest, with the greater part of his works, were given to the world by his surviving and sorrowing father, who thus endeavored to perpetuate the benefits conferred on society by his illustrious son. The task of editing these precious remains was committed to Dr. Tillotson, who appears to have exercised his discretion in dividing some of the sermons, and correcting various inaccuracies in others: he has given a concise account of his editorial labors, and of the works themselves, in the preface.* Abraham Hill, Esq. was his co-executor, and these two friends were empowered to determine on such works as should be published. Having now gone through the principal events recorded in the life of this great man, who died at the early age of 47, and yet left behind him such a reputation as few persons have been able to acquire in the longest and most active career, I cannot find a more appropriate conclusion to my

* Three volumes in folio were published in 1683; and a 4th volume, containing the Opuscula, came out in 1687.

history than that beautiful and expressive sentence of his own, in which he says, "power may be dreaded; riches may be courted; wit and knowlege may be admired; but only *goodness* is truly esteemed and honored."*

LIST OF DR. BARROW'S WORKS.

1. Euclidis Elementa: Cantabrigiæ, 1655, et sæpius, 8vo. Afterwards translated into English, and published, London, 1660. &c.

2. Euclidis Data: Cantabrigiæ, 1657. This was subjoined to the Elements in some subsequent Editions.

3. Lectiones Opticæ XVIII; Cantabrigiæ, in scholis publicis, habitæ, &c. Londini, 1669. 4to.

4. Lectiones Geometricæ XIII. Londini, 1670. 4to.

5. Archimedis Opera, Apollonii Conicorum libri IV. Theodosii Sphærica, &c. Londini, 1675. 4to.

The following were published after his decease.

1. Lectio, in qua Theoremata Archimedis de sphæra et cylindro &c., exhibentur: Londini, 1678. 12mo.

2. Mathematicæ Lectiones, habitæ in Scholis publicis Academiæ Cantabrigiensis, &c. Londini, 1683. 8vo.

3. The English Works of Dr. Barrow, edited by Dr. John Tillotson, with a Preface by A. Hill, Esq., in three vols. London, 1683. &c. folio.

The First Volume contains,

Thirty-two Sermons on several occasions.

A brief exposition of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Decalogue, and the doctrine of the Sacraments.

A treatise of the Pope's Supremacy.

A discourse concerning the Unity of the Church.

The Second Volume contains,

Sermons and Expositions on all the articles of the Apostles' Creed.

The Third Volume contains,

Forty-five Sermons on several occasions.

4. Isaaci Barrow, S.S.T. professoris Opuscula, &c. Londini, 1687.

---

* Serm. iv. p. 98.

folio. This is called Volumen quartum, though printed after the three preceding Volumes.

5. There are two letters written by him to Mr. Willughby, and printed in the Philosophical Letters between Mr. Ray and his correspondents, pp. 360. 362.

Dr. Ward also informs us* that W. Jones, Esq. communicated to him several curious papers of Dr. Barrow, written in his own hand, of which he gives the following account.

1. A Latin Volume in 4to. wherein are contained,

Compendium pro tangentibus determinandis.

Æquationum constructio per conicas sectiones.

Æquationum constructio geometrica.

Additamenta de curvis.

Which tracts seem to have been written before the publication of his Lectiones Geometricæ.

2. Theorema generale ad lineis curvis tangentes, et curvarum figurarum areas, per motum determinandas: folio: half a sheet.

3. Letters to Mr. John Collins on various mathematical subjects.

Concerning parabolical conoids, without a date.

Rectifying a mistake of Mr. Collins, concerning the parallel sections of the cubical parabolical conoid. Without a date.

Rules to compute the portions of a sphere or spheroid. Sept. 5. 1664.

A character of Mengolus's Elementa Geometriæ Speciosæ, with whom he is displeased for his affectation of new definitions and uncouth terms. Nov. 12. 1664.

He thanks him for a catalogue of mathematical books, which he sent him: gives a character of Alsted's Admiranda Mathematica, which he thinks a work of no great importance. Nov. 29. 1664.

Concerning a parabolical conoid, cut parallel to the axis. Jan. 9. 1664.

About printing his Archimedes, Apollonius, and Theodosius, as also a new edition of his Euclid. March 3. 1665.

Concerning the area of the common hyperbola, found by logarithms. Feb. 1. 1666.

Containing a variety of rules relating to the circle and hyperbola, with theorems concerning the curve surfaces of conoids and spheroids. March 6. 1667.

A continuation of the same subject. March 26. 1668.

A further continuation of it. May 14. 1668.

---

* Lives of Gresham Professors, p. 166.

Concerning the linea secantium. With two papers; one of the figure of secants and tangents, applied to the arch, or radius; the other concerning the cissoidal space. March 13. 1668.

Concerning the publication of his Lectiones Opticæ. Dat. Easter Eve, 1669.

Sends him some few things to be inserted in his Lectiones Geometricæ, which were then printing. March 29. 1670.

Concerning the publication of those Lectures. April 23. 1670.

Sends him his Apollonius and Perspective Lectures. Oct. 11. 1670.

In addition to the above there is in the Public Library at Cambridge, a volume in 8vo. marked Dd. xiv. 9. containing Sermons and Fragments. This Ms. came into its present place with the other Mss. and books of Bishop Moore presented by George I. to the University. The following note appears written at the beginning: "Hic Liber, ut ex manu videtur, fuit viri doctissimi Isaaci Barrow." When I compared its writing with undoubted autographs of Barrow, in company with Mr. Lee, Fellow of Trinity College, who has devoted much time and labor to the completion of a catalogue of Barrow's works, in the library of his own college, neither that gentleman nor myself had any doubt but that the writing in question was Barrow's.

The library of Trinity College contains thirteen Ms. Vols. of Barrow's works, published and unpublished, most of the former being in their primitive state, varying from the printed editions, or rough draughts of what afterwards were expanded into Sermons, &c. Among the latter is an extraordinary number of extracts from Demosthenes, Æschines, Plutarch, Cicero, &c., as well as from the Christian fathers; pages of detached sentences for the treatise on the Pope's supremacy, &c.; arguments on several questions in the Divinity Schools; miscellaneous notes, and references to the New Testament, &c. But the most valuable of these volumes is that containing four sermons, in the first page of which is the following note: "Dr. Isaac Barrow's sermons preached in 1676. Preached by him." The hand-writing is very large, and decidedly not that of Barrow.

SERMONS.

SUMMARY OF SERMON I.

PROVERBS, CHAP. III.—VERSE 17.

MEANING of the words of the text: by *wisdom* is understood an habitual skill or faculty of judging aright about matters of practice, choosing according to that right judgment, and conforming the actions to such good choice. *Ways* and *paths* in Scripture dialect are the courses and manners of action: by pleasantness may be meant the joy and delight accompanying a course of such actions, and by *peace* the content and satisfaction which ensue from it. So that the text may be taken simply to represent unto us, that a course of life directed by wisdom and good judgment is delightful in the practice, and brings content after it. This proposition is confirmed by divers reasons, and illustrated by several instances.

I. It is shown that wisdom is of itself delectable and satisfactory, as it implies a revelation of truth, and a detection of error to us; as it satisfies our best desires, not by entertaining us with dry, empty, and fruitless theories on mean and vulgar subjects, but by enriching our minds with excellent and useful knowlege, directed to the noblest objects, and serviceable to the highest ends.

II. Much more in its consequences is wisdom exceedingly

pleasant and peaceable: in general, by disposing us to acquire and to enjoy all the good and happiness we are capable of; and by freeing us from the inconveniences and mischiefs to which our condition is subject, &c.: more particularly,

III. Wisdom assures us that we take the best course, and proceed as we ought: for by the same means we judge aright, and reflecting on that judgment, are assured we do so. Wisdom therefore frees us from the company of anxious doubt in our actions, and the consequence of bitter repentance.

IV. Wisdom begets in us a hope of success in our actions, and is usually attended therewith: but what is more delicious than hope? what more satisfactory than success?

V. Wisdom prevents discouragement from the possibility of ill success; yea, and makes disappointment itself tolerable. However the irresistible power of divine Providence, guided by the unsearchable counsel of his will, may interpose to thwart our endeavors; yet when we act prudently, we have no reason to be disheartened, because, having had good intentions, having used fit means, and having done our best, as no deserved blame, so no considerable damage can arrive to us: and though we find that Almighty God has crossed us, yet we are sure he is not displeased with us. The best and wisest attempts have oftentimes miscarried: instances given from Moses, and the holy prophets, and our Saviour. But farther,

VI. Wisdom makes all the troubles, griefs, and pains incident to life, whether casual adversities or natural afflictions, easy and supportable, by rightly valuing the importance and moderating the influence of them, &c.

VII. Wisdom has always a good conscience attending it, that purest delight and richest cordial of the soul; that impregnable fortress against external assaults and inward commotions; that certain friend, which, as Solomon observes, renders a man's *sleep sweet;* &c.

VIII. Wisdom confers on its possessor a facility, expert

readiness, and dexterity in action, which is a very pleasant and commodious quality; removing obstructions, directing the intention to ends possible and attainable; suggesting fit means to work by; and contriving right methods of process, &c.

IX. Wisdom begets a sound, healthful, and harmonious complexion of the soul, disposing us with judgment to distinguish, and with pleasure to relish, wholesome things; but to nauseate and reject such as are noxious.

X. Wisdom acquaints us with ourselves, our own temper and constitution, our propensities and passions, our habitudes and capacities; a thing not only very advantageous to us, but also very satisfactory and delightful. Errors of conduct, into which a fool is apt to fall, described. The contrary course of him, who, by impartial reflexion on his own mind, grows familiar with himself.

XI. Wisdom procures and preserves a constant favor and fair respect of men, purchases a good name, and upholds reputation, which things are naturally desirable, &c. This point enlarged on.

XII. Wisdom instructs us to examine, compare, and rightly to value the objects that court our affections and challenge our care, merely regulating our passions and moderating our endeavors; whence ensue a pleasant serenity and peaceable tranquillity of mind. Instances given of corporeal pleasures, honor, power, wit, and beauty, in which wisdom exercising severe and impartial judgment, and perceiving that they have in them no intrinsic excellence, produce no solid content or perfection to the mind, no security to the future condition, or any other durable advantages, concludes that they deserve not any high opinion of the mind regarding them, nor any laborious care in the pursuit of them.

XIII. Wisdom distinguishing the circumstances, limiting the measures, determining the modes, appointing the fit seasons of action; preserves order, the parent of peace, and prevents

confusion, the mother of iniquity, strife, and disquiet. Business of human life compared to a building, &c.

XIV. Wisdom discovers our relations, duties, and concernments with respect to men, as well as the natural grounds of them; thereby both qualifying and inclining us to the discharge of them; whence exceeding convenience, pleasure, and content ensue: the topic enlarged on: so that wisdom in this point of view is the genuine parent of all moral and political virtue; as Solomon says in her person, *I lead in a way of righteousness and in the midst of the paths of judgment.*

XV. The principal advantage of wisdom is, that it acquaints us with the nature and reason of true religion, affording the most convincing arguments to persuade us to the practice of it; which is accompanied by the purest of all delights. The manner in which wisdom acquaints us with the nature of religion, that is, wherein it consists, and what it requires, explained. The incentives by which it allures and persuades us noticed.

Lastly, wisdom attracts the favor of God, purchases for us a glorious reward, and secures to us a perpetual felicity. *For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom:* Wisd. vii. 28. God loveth wisdom as most agreeable to his own nature, &c. And the paths she leads in are such as directly tend to the promised inheritance of joy and bliss.

Passage of great eloquence, showing how we ought to endeavor to obtain this excellent endowment of soul; with a concluding fervent aspiration after it.

SERMON I.

THE PLEASANTNESS OF RELIGION.

PROVERBS, CHAP. III.—VERSE 17.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

THE meaning of these words seems plain and obvious, and to need little explication. 'Her ways,' that is, the ways of Wisdom. What this wisdom is, I shall not undertake accurately to describe. Briefly, I understand by it, an habitual skill or faculty of judging aright about matters of practice, and choosing according to that right judgment, and conforming the actions to such good choice. 'Ways' and 'paths' in Scripture dialect are the courses and manners of action. For 'doing' there is commonly called 'walking;' and the methods of doing are the 'ways' in which we walk. By pleasantness may be meant the joy and delight accompanying, and by peace the content and satisfaction ensuing such a course of actions. So that, in short, the sense of these words seems simply to be this; that a course of life directed by wisdom and good judgment is delightful in the practice, and brings content after it. The truth of which proposition it shall be my endeavor at this time to confirm by divers reasons, and illustrate by several instances.

I. Then, wisdom of itself is delectable and satisfactory,* as it implies a revelation of truth, and a detection of error to us. It is like light, pleasant to behold, casting a sprightly lustre, and

* Veritatis luce menti hominis nihil dulcius. Cic. Acad. 2.

diffusing a benign influence all about; presenting a goodly prospect of things to the eyes of our mind; displaying objects in their due shapes, postures, magnitudes, and colors; quickening our spirits with a comfortable warmth, and disposing our minds to a cheerful activity; dispelling the darkness of ignorance, scattering the mists of doubt, driving away the spectres of delusive fancy; mitigating the cold of sullen melancholy; discovering obstacles, securing progress, and making the passages of life clear, open, and pleasant. We are all naturally endowed with a strong appetite to know, to see, to pursue truth; and with a bashful abhorrency from being deceived and entangled in mistake. And as success in inquiry after truth affords matter of joy and triumph; so being conscious of error and miscarriage therein, is attended with shame and sorrow. These desires wisdom in the most perfect manner satisfies, not by entertaining us with dry, empty, fruitless theories, on mean and vulgar subjects; but by enriching our minds with excellent and useful knowlege, directed to the noblest objects, and serviceable to the highest ends. Nor in its own nature only, but,

II. Much more in its worthy consequences is wisdom exceedingly pleasant and peaceable: in general, by disposing us to acquire and to enjoy all the good, delight, and happiness we are capable of; and by freeing us from all the inconveniences, mischiefs, and infelicities our condition is subject to. For whatever good from clear understanding, deliberate advice, sagacious foresight, stable resolution, dexterous address, right intention, and orderly proceeding doth naturally result, wisdom confers: whatever evil blind ignorance, false presumption, unwary credulity, precipitate rashness, unsteady purpose, ill contrivance, backwardness, inability, unwieldiness and confusion of thought, beget, wisdom prevents. From a thousand snares and treacherous allurements, from innumerable rocks and dangerous surprises, from exceedingly many needless incumbrances and vexatious toils of fruitless endeavor, she redeems and secures us. More particularly,

III. Wisdom assures us we take the best course, and proceed as we ought. For by the same means we judge aright, and reflecting on that judgment are assured we do so: as the

same arguments by which we demonstrate a theorem convince us we have demonstrated it, and the same light by which we see an object makes us know we see it. And this assurance in the progress of the action exceedingly pleases, and in the sequel of it infinitely contents us. He that judges amiss, not perceiving clearly the rectitude of his process, proceeds usually with a dubious solicitude; and at length, discovering his error, condemns his own choice, and receives no other satisfaction but of repentance. Like a traveller, who, being uncertain whether he goes in the right way, wanders in continual perplexity, till he be informed, and then too late, understanding his mistake, with regret seeks to recover himself into it. But he that knows his way, and is satisfied that it is the true one, makes on merrily and carelessly, not doubting he shall in good time arrive to his designed journey's end. Two troublesome mischiefs therefore wisdom frees us from, the company of anxious doubt in our actions, and the consequence of bitter repentance: for no man can doubt of what he is sure, nor repent of what he knows good.

IV. Wisdom begets in us a hope of success in our actions, and is usually attended therewith. Now what is more delicious than hope? what more satisfactory than success? That is like the pursuit of a flying enemy, this like gathering the spoil; that like viewing the ripe corn, this like the joy of harvest itself. And he that aims at a good end, and knows he uses proper means to attain it, why should he despair of success, since effects naturally follow their causes, and the Divine Providence is wont to afford its concourse to such proceedings? Beside that such well-grounded hope confirms resolution, and quickens activity, which mainly conduce to the prosperous issue of designs. Farther,

V. Wisdom prevents discouragement from the possibility of ill success, yea and makes disappointment itself tolerable. For if either the foresight of a possible miscarriage should discourage us from adventuring on action, or inculpable frustration were intolerable, we should with no heart apply ourselves to any thing; there being no designs in this world, though founded on the most sound advice, and prosecuted by the most diligent endeavor, which may not be defeated, as depending on divers

causes above our power, and circumstances beyond our prospect. The inconstant opinions, uncertain resolutions, mutable affections, and fallacious pretences of men, on which the accomplishment of most projects rely, may easily deceive and disappoint us. The imperceptible course of nature exerting itself in sudden tempests, diseases, and unlucky casualties, may surprise us, and give an end to our businesses and lives together. However, the irresistible power of the Divine Providence, guided by the unsearchable counsel of his will, we can never be assured that it will not interpose, and hinder the effects of our endeavors. Yet notwithstanding, when we act prudently, we have no reason to be disheartened; because having good intentions, and using fit means, and having done our best, as no deserved blame, so no considerable damage can arrive to us: and though we find Almighty God hath crossed us, yet we are sure he is not displeased with us. Which consideration, wherewith wisdom furnishes us, will make the worst success not only tolerable, but comfortable to us. For hence we have reason to hope that the All-wise Goodness reserves a better reward for us, and will sometime recompense not only the good purposes we unhappily pursued, but also the unexpected disappointment we patiently endured; and that however we shall be no losers in the end. Which discourse is mainly fortified by considering how the best and wisest attempts have oft miscarried. We see Moses, authorised by God's command, directed by his counsel, and conducted by his hand, intended to bring the Israelites into the land of Canaan; yet by the unreasonable incredulity and stubborn perverseness of that people, he had his purpose frustrated. The holy prophets afterward earnestly endeavored to contain the same people within compass of obedience to the divine commands, and to reduce them from their idolatrous and wicked courses; yet without correspondent effect. Our Saviour, by the example of his holy life, continual instruction, and vehement exhortations, assayed to procure a belief of, and submission to, his most excellent doctrine; yet how few 'believed his report,' and complied with his discipline! Yea, Almighty God himself often complains how in a manner his designs were defeated, his desires thwarted, his offers refused, his counsels rejected, his

expectations deceived. 'Wherefore,' (saith he concerning his vineyard,) 'when I looked it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?' Isa. v. 4. And again, 'I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people:' Isa. lxv. 2. And again, 'I have even sent unto you all my prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them: yet they hearkened not unto me:' Jer. vii. 25. 26. Wherefore there is no good cause we should be disheartened, or vexed, when success is wanting to well-advised purposes. It is foolish and ill-grounded intentions, and practices unwarrantable by good reason, that make the undertakers solicitous of success, and being defeated leave them disconsolate. Yea farther,

VI. Wisdom makes all the troubles, griefs, and pains incident to life, whether casual adversities, or natural afflictions, easy and supportable; by rightly valuing the importance, and moderating the influence of them. It suffers not busy fancy to alter the nature, amplify the degree, or extend the duration of them, by representing them more sad, heavy, and remediless than they truly are. It allows them no force beyond what naturally and necessarily they have, nor contributes nourishment to their increase. It keeps them at a due distance, not permitting them to encroach on the soul, or to propagate their influence beyond their proper sphere. It will not let external mischances, as poverty and disgrace, to produce an inward sense which is beyond their natural efficacy; nor corporeal affections of sickness and pain to disturb the mind, with which they have nothing to do. The region of these malignant distempers being at most but the habit of the body, wisdom by effectual antidotes repels them from the heart and inward parts of the soul. If any thing, sin, and our unworthy miscarriages toward God, should vex and discompose us; yet this trouble wisdom, by representing the divine goodness, and his tender mercies in our ever blessed Redeemer, doth perfectly allay. And as for all other adversities, it abates their noxious power by showing us they are either merely imaginary, or very short and temporary; that they admit of remedy, or at most do not exclude comfort, not wholly hindering the operations of the mind, nor extinguishing its joys; that they may have a profitable

use and pleasant end; and, however, neither imply bad conscience, nor induce obligation to punishment. For,

VII. Wisdom hath always a good conscience attending it, that purest delight and richest cordial of the soul; that brazen wall, and impregnable fortress against both external assaults and internal commotions; that 'continual feast,' whereon the mind, destitute of all other repast, with a never languishing appetite may entertain itself; that faithful witness and impartial judge, whoever accuses, always acquitting the innocent soul; that certain friend, in no strait failing, in no adversity deserting; that sure refuge in all storms of fortune and persecutions of disgrace; which, as Solomon here notes, renders a man's 'sleep sweet,' and undisturbed with fearful phantasms, his heart light, and his steps secure; and, if any thing, can make the Stoical paradox good, and cause the wise man to smile in extremity of torment; arming his mind with an invincible courage, and infusing a due confidence into it, whereby he bears up cheerfully against malicious reproach, undauntedly sustains adversity, and triumphs over bad fortune. And this invaluable treasure the wise man is only capable of possessing; who certainly knows, and heartily approves the grounds on which he proceeds; whereas the fool, building his choice on blind chance, or violent passion, or giddy fancy, or uncertain example, not on the steady warrant of good reason, cannot avoid being perplexed with suspicion of mistake, and so necessarily is deprived of the comfort of a good conscience.

VIII. Wisdom confers a facility, expert readiness, and dexterity in action; which is a very pleasant and commodious quality, and exceedingly sweetens activity. To do things with difficulty, struggling, and immoderate contention, disheartens a man, quells his courage, blunts the edge of his resolution, renders him sluggish and averse from business, though apprehended never so necessary, and of great moment. These obstructions wisdom removes, facilitating operations by directing the intention to ends possible and attainable, by suggesting fit means and instruments to work by, by contriving right methods and courses of process; the mind by it being stored with variety of good principles, sure rules, and happy expedients, reposed in the

memory, and ready on all occasions to be produced and employed in practice.

IX. Wisdom begets a sound, healthful, and harmonious complexion of the soul, disposing us with judgment to distinguish, and with pleasure to relish savory and wholesome things, but to nauseate and reject such as are ingrateful and noxious to us; thereby capacifying us to enjoy pleasantly and innocently all those good things the divine goodness hath provided for and consigned to us; whence to the soul proceeds all that comfort, joy, and vigor, which results to the body from a good constitution and perfect health.

X. Wisdom acquaints us with ourselves, our own temper and constitution, our propensions and passions, our habitudes and capacities; a thing not only of mighty advantage, but of infinite pleasure and content to us. No man in the world less knows a fool than himself; nay, he is more than ignorant, for he constantly errs in the point, taking himself for, and demeaning himself as toward another, a better, a wiser, and abler man than he is. He hath wonderful conceits of his own qualities and faculties; he affects commendations incompetent to him; he soars at employment surpassing his ability to manage. No comedy can represent a mistake more odd and ridiculous than his; for he wanders, and stares, and hunts after, but never can find nor discern himself; but always encounters with a false shadow instead thereof, which he passionately hugs and admires. But a wise man, by constant observation and impartial reflexion on himself, grows very familiar with himself: he perceives his own inclinations, which, if bad, he strives to alter and correct; if good, he cherishes and corroborates them: he apprehends the matters he is fitting for and capable to manage, neither too mean and unworthy of him, nor too high and difficult for him; and those applying his care to, he transacts easily, cheerfully, and successfully. So being neither puffed up with vain and overweening opinion, nor dejected with heartless diffidence of himself; neither admiring, nor despising; neither irksomely hating, nor fondly loving himself; he continues in good humor, maintains a sure friendship and fair correspondence with himself, and rejoices in the retirement and private conversation

with his own thoughts: whence flows a pleasure and satisfaction unexpressible.

XI. Wisdom procures and preserves a constant favor and fair respect of men, purchases a good name, and upholds reputation in the world: which things are naturally desirable, commodious for life, encouragements to good, and preventive of many inconveniences. The composed frame of mind, uniform and comely demeanor, compliant and inoffensive conversation, fair and punctual dealing, considerate motions, and dexterous addresses of wise men naturally beget esteem and affection in those that observe them. Neither than these things is there any thing more commendable to human regard. As symmetry and harmony to the animal senses, so delectable is an even temper of soul and orderly tenor of actions to rational apprehensions. Folly is freakish and humorous, impertinent and obstreperous, inconstant and inconsistent, peevish and exceptious; and consequently fastidious to society, and productive of aversation and disrespect. But the wise man is stable in his ways, consonant to himself, suiting his actions to his words, and those to his principles, and all to the rule of right reason; so that you may know where to find him, and how to deal with him, and may easily please him, which makes his acquaintance acceptable, and his person valuable: beside that real worth of itself commands respect, and extorts veneration from men, and usually prosperity waits on his well-advised attempts, which exceedingly adorn and advance the credit of the undertaker: however, if he fail sometime, his usual deportment salves his repute, and easily makes it credible it was no fault of his, but of his fortune. If a fool prosper, the honor is attributed to propitious chance; if he miscarry, to his own ill management: but the intire glory of happy undertakings crowns the head of wisdom; while the disgrace of unlucky events falls otherwhere. His light, like that of the sun, cannot totally be eclipsed; it may be dimmed, but never extinguished, and always maintains a day, though overclouded with misfortune. Who less esteems the famous African captain for being overthrown in that last fatal battle, wherein he is said to have shown the best skill, and yet endured the worst of success? Who contemns Cato and other

the grave citizens of Rome for embracing the just but improsperous cause of the commonwealth? A wise man's circumstances may vary and fluctuate like the floods about a rock; but he persists unmoveably the same, and his reputation unshaken; for he can always render a good account of his actions, and by reasonable apology elude the assaults of reproach.

XII. Wisdom instructs us to examine, compare, and rightly to value the objects that court our affections, and challenge our care; and thereby regulates our passions, and moderates our endeavors, which begets a pleasant serenity and peaceable tranquillity of mind. For when, being deluded with false shows, and relying on ill-grounded presumptions, we highly esteem, passionately affect, and eagerly pursue things of little worth in themselves, or concernment to us, as we unhandsomely prostitute our affections, and prodigally misspend our time, and vainly lose our labor; so the event not answering our expectation, our minds thereby are confounded, disturbed, and distempered. But when, guided by right reason, we conceive great esteem of, and zealously are enamored with, and vigorously strive to attain things of excellent worth and weighty consequence; the conscience of having well placed our affections, and well employed our pains, and the experience of fruits corresponding to our hopes, ravishes our mind with unexpressible content. And so it is: present appearance and vulgar conceit ordinarily impose on our fancies, disguising things with a deceitful varnish, and representing those that are vainest with the greatest advantage; whilst the noblest objects, being of a more subtile and spiritual nature, like fairest jewels inclosed in a homely box, avoid the notice of gross sense, and pass undiscerned by us. But the light of wisdom, as it unmasks specious imposture, and bereaves it of its false colors; so it penetrates into the retirements of true excellency, and reveals its genuine lustre. For example, corporeal pleasure, which so powerfully allures and enchants us, wisdom declares that it is but a present, momentary, and transient satisfaction of brutish sense, dimming the light, sullying the beauty, impairing the vigor, and restraining the activity of the mind; diverting from better operations, and indisposing it to enjoy purer delights; leaving no comfortable relish or gladsome memory behind it, but often followed with

bitterness, regret, and disgrace. That the profit the world so greedily gapes after is but a possession of trifles, not valuable in themselves, nor rendering the masters of them so; accidentally obtained, and promiscuously enjoyed by all sorts, but commonly by the worst of men; difficultly acquired, and easily lost; however, to be used but for a very short time, and then to be resigned into uncertain hands. That the honor men so dote on is ordinarily but the difference of a few petty circumstances, a peculiar name or title, a determinate place, a distinguishing ensign; things of only imaginary excellence, derived from chance, and conferring no advantage, except from some little influence they have on the arbitrary opinion and fickle humor of the people; complacence in which is vain, and reliance on it dangerous. That power and dominion, which men so impatiently struggle for, are but necessary evils introduced to restrain the bad tempers of men; most evil to them that enjoy them; requiring tedious attendance, distracting care, and vexatious toil; attended with frequent disappointment, opprobrious censure, and dangerous envy; having such real burdens, and slavish incumbrances, sweetened only by superficial pomps, strained obsequiousness, some petty privileges and exemptions scarce worth the mentioning. That wit and parts, of which men make such ostentation, are but natural endowments, commendable only in order to use, apt to engender pride and vanity, and hugely dangerous, if abused or misemployed. What should I mention beauty, that fading toy; or bodily strength and activity, qualities so palpably inconsiderable? On these and such like flattering objects, so adored by vulgar opinion, wisdom exercising severe and impartial judgment, and perceiving in them no intrinsic excellence, no solid content springing from them, no perfection thence accruing to the mind, no high reward allotted to them, no security to the future condition, or other durable advantages proceeding from them; it concludes they deserve not any high opinion of the mind, nor any vehement passion of the soul, nor any laborious care to be employed on them, and moderates our affections toward them: it frees us from anxious desire of them; from being transported with excessive joy in the acquisition of them; from being overwhelmed with disconsolate sorrow at the missing of them, or

parting with them; from repining and envying at those who have better success than ourselves in the procuring them; from immoderate toil in getting, and care in preserving them: and so delivering us from all these unquiet anxieties of thought, tumultuous perturbations of passion, and tedious vexations of body, it maintains our minds in a cheerful calm, quiet indifferency, and comfortable liberty. On the other side, things of real worth and high concernment, that produce great satisfaction to the mind, and are mainly conducible to our happiness, such as are a right understanding and strong sense of our obligations to Almighty God, and relations to men, a sound temper and complexion of mind, a virtuous disposition, a capacity to discharge the duties of our places, a due qualification to enjoy the happiness of the other world; these and such like things, by discovering their nature and the effects resulting from them, it engages us highly to esteem, ardently to affect, and industriously to pursue; so preventing the inconveniences that follow the want of them, and conveying the benefits arising from the possession of them.

XIII. Wisdom distinguishes the circumstances, limits the measures, determines the modes, appoints the fit seasons of action; so preserving decorum and order, the parent of peace, and preventing confusion, the mother of iniquity, strife, and disquiet. It is in the business of human life as in a building; a due proportion of bigness, a fit situation of place, a correspondency of shape, and suitableness of color, is to be observed between the parts thereof: a defect in any of which requisites, though the materials hap to be choice and excellent, makes the whole fabric deformed and ugly to judicious apprehension. The best actions, if they swell, and exceed their due measure, if they be unskilfully misplaced, if in uncouth manner performed, they lose their quality, and turn both to the disgrace and disadvantage of life. It is commendable to pray; but they that would always be performing that duty, by their absurd devotion procured to themselves the title of heretics; and they that will stand praying in places of public concourse, deserved our Saviour's reprehensions; and those men who, against the custom and ordinary use, would needs pray with their faces covered, you know St. Paul insinuates of them, that

they were fond and contentious persons. Friendly admonition is very laudable, and of rare use; but being on all occasions immoderately used, or in public society so as to encroach on modesty, or endamage reputation; or when the person admonished is otherwise employed, and attent on his business; or being delivered in an imperiously insulting way, or in harsh and opprobrious language; it becomes unsavory and odious, and both in show and effect resembles a froward, malicious exceptiousness. It were infinite to compute in how many instances want of due order, measure, and manner, do spoil and incommodate action. It is wisdom that applies remedy to these mischiefs. Things must be compared to and arbitrated by her standard, or else they will contain something of monstrous enormity; either strutting in unwieldy bulk, or sinking in defective scantness. If she do not fashion and model circumstances, they will sit ugly on the things that wear them; if she do not temper the colors, and describe the lineaments, the draught of practice will be but rude and imperfect, and little resemble the true patterns of duty: but if she interpose and perform her part, all things will appear conformable, neat, and delicate.

XIV. Wisdom discovers our relations, duties, and concernments, in respect of men, with the natural grounds of them; thereby both qualifying and inclining us to the discharge of them: whence exceeding convenience, pleasure, and content ensues. By it we understand we are parts and members of the great body, the universe; and are therefore concerned in the good management of it, and are thereby obliged to procure its order and peace, and by no irregular undertaking to disturb or discompose it; which makes us honest and peaceable men: that we proceed from the same primitive stock, are children of the same father, and partake of the same blood with all men; are endowed with like faculties of mind, passions of soul, shape of body, and sense of things: that we have equally implanted in our original constitution inclinations to love, pity, gratitude, sociableness, quiet, joy, reputation: that we have an indispensable need and impatient desire of company, assistance, comfort, and relief; that therefore it is according to the design of nature, and agreeable to reason, that

to those, to whom our natural condition by so many bands of cognation, similitude, and mutual necessitude, hath knit and conjoined us, we should bear a kind respect and tender affection; should cheerfully concur in undergoing the common burdens; should heartily wish and industriously promote their good, assist them in accomplishing their reasonable desires, thankfully requite the courtesies received from them, congratulate and rejoice with them in their prosperity, comfort them in their distresses, and, as we are able, relieve them; however, tenderly compassionate their disappointments, miseries, and sorrows. This renders us kind and courteous neighbors, sweet and grateful companions. It represents unto us the dreadful effects and insupportable mischiefs arising from breach of faith, contravening the obligations of solemn pacts, infringing public laws, deviating from the received rules of equity, violating promises, and interrupting good correspondence among men; by which considerations it engages us to be good citizens, obedient subjects, just dealers, and faithful friends. It minds us of the blindness, impotence, and levity, the proneness to mistake and misbehavior that human nature necessarily is subject to; deserving rather our commiseration than anger or hatred, which prompts us to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to be gentle in censure, to be insensible of petty affronts, to pardon injuries, to be patient, exorable, and reconcilable to those that give us greatest cause of offence. It teaches us the good may, but the evil of our neighbor can in no wise advantage us; that from the suffering of any man, simply considered, no benefit can accrue, nor natural satisfaction arise to us; and that therefore it is a vain, base, brutish, and unreasonable thing, for any cause whatsoever, to desire or delight in the grief, pain, or misery of our neighbor, to hate or envy him, or insult over him, or devise mischief to him, or prosecute revenge on him; which makes us civil, noble, and placable enemies, or rather no enemies at all. So that wisdom is in effect the genuine parent of all moral and political virtue, justice, and honesty; as Solomon says in her person, 'I lead in the way of righteousness,' and 'in the midst of the paths of judgment:' Prov. viii. 20. And how sweet these are in the practice, how comfortable in the consequences, the testimony of continual expe-

rience, and the unanimous consent of all wise men sufficiently declare. But farther,

XV. The principal advantage of wisdom is, its acquainting us with the nature and reason of true religion, and affording convictive arguments to persuade to the practice of it; which is accompanied with the purest delight, and attended with the most solid content imaginable. I say, the nature of religion, wherein it consists, and what it requires; the mistake of which produceth daily so many mischiefs and inconveniences in the world, and exposes so good a name to so much reproach. It showeth it consisteth not in fair professions and glorious pretences, but in real practice; not in a pertinacious adherence to any sect or party, but in a sincere love of goodness, and dislike of naughtiness, wherever discovering itself; not in vain ostentations and florishes of outward performance, but in an inward good complexion of mind, exerting itself in works of true devotion and charity; not in a nice orthodoxy, or politic subjection of our judgments to the peremptory dictates of men, but in a sincere love of truth, in a hearty approbation of, and compliance with, the doctrines fundamentally good, and necessary to be believed; not in harsh censuring and virulently inveighing against others, but in careful amending our own ways; not in a peevish crossness and obstinate repugnancy to received laws and customs, but in a quiet and peaceable submission to the express laws of God, and lawful commands of man; not in a furious zeal for or against trivial circumstances, but in a conscionable practising the substantial parts of religion; not in a frequent talking or contentious disputing about it, but in a ready observance of the unquestionable rules and prescripts of it: in a word, that religion consists in nothing else but doing what becomes our relation to God, in a conformity or similitude to his nature, and in a willing obedience to his holy will: to which by potent incentives it allures and persuades us; by representing to us his transcendently glorious attributes, conspicuoulsy displayed in the frame, order, and government of the world: that wonderful Power, which erected this great and goodly fabric; that incomprehensible Wisdom, which preserves it in a constant harmony; that immense Goodness, which hath so carefully provided for the various necessities, delights, and

comforts of its innumerable inhabitants. I say, by representing those infinitely glorious perfections, it engages us with highest respect to esteem, reverence, and honor him. Also, by minding us of our manifold obligations to him, our receiving being, life, reason, sense, all the faculties, powers, excellencies, privileges, and commodities of our natures from him; of his tender care and loving providence continually supporting and protecting us; of his liberal beneficence, patient indulgence, and earnest desire of our good and happiness, by manifold expressions evidently manifested towards us; it inflames us with ardent love, and obliges us to officious gratitude toward him. Also, by declaring the necessary and irreconcilable contrariety of his nature to all impurity and perverseness, his peerless majesty, his irresistible power, and his all-seeing knowlege, it begets an awful dread and a devout fear of him. By discovering him from his infinite benignity willing, and from his unlimited power only able to supply our needs, relieve us in distresses, protect us from dangers, and confer any valuable benefit on us, it engenders faith, and encourages us to rely on him. By revealing to us his supereminent sovereignty, uncontrollable dominion, and unquestionable authority over us; together with the admirable excellency, wisdom, and equity of his laws, so just and reasonable in themselves, so suitable to our nature, so conducible to our good, so easy and practicable, so sweet and comfortable: it powerfully inclines, and by a gentle force as it were constrains us to obedience. By such efficacious inducements wisdom urges us to all duties of religion, and withal surely directs us (as I before said) wherein it consists; teaching us to have right and worthy apprehensions of the divine nature, to which our devotion, if true and good, must be suited and conformed: and so it frees us, as from irreligion and profane neglect of God, so from fond superstitions, the sources of so much evil to mankind. For he that wisely hath considered the wisdom, goodness, and power of God, cannot imagine God can with a regardless eye overlook his presumptuous contempts of his laws, or endure him to proceed in an outrageous defiance of heaven, to continue hurting himself, or injuring his neighbor; nor can admit unreasonable terrors, or entertain suspicious conceits of God, as of an imperious master, or implacable

tyrant over him, exacting impossible performances from, or delighting in the fatal miseries of his creatures; nor can suppose him pleased with hypocritical shows, and greatly taken with superficial courtships of ceremonious address; or that he can in any wise favor our fiery zeals, fierce passions, or unjust partialities about matter of opinion and ceremony; or can do otherwise than detest all factious, harsh, uncharitable, and revengeful proceedings, of what nature, or on what ground soever; or that he can be so inconsistent with himself as to approve any thing but what is like himself, that is, righteousness, sincerity, and beneficence.

Lastly, wisdom attracts the favor of God, purchaseth a glorious reward, and secureth perpetual felicity to us. 'For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom:' Wisd. vii. 28. And, 'glorious is the fruit of good labors, and the root of wisdom shall never fall away:' Id. iii. 15. And, 'happy is the man that findeth wisdom:' and 'whoso findeth her, findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord:' Prov. iii. 13. viii. 35. These are the words of wise Solomon in the book of Wisdom and in the Proverbs. God loveth her as most agreeable to his nature; as resembling him; as an offspring, beam, and efflux of that wisdom which founded the earth, and established the heavens; as that which begetteth honor, love, and obedience to his commands, and truly glorifies him; and as that which promotes the good of his creatures, which he earnestly desires. And the paths she leads in are such as directly tend to the promised inheritance of joy and bliss.

Thus have I simply and plainly presented you with part of what my meditation suggested on this subject: it remains that we endeavor to obtain this excellent endowment of soul, by the faithful exercise of our reason, careful observation of things, diligent study of the divine law, watchful reflexion on ourselves, virtuous and religious practice; but especially by imploring the divine influence, the original spring of light and fountain of all true knowlege, following St. James's advice; 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth freely.' Therefore, O everlasting Wisdom, the Maker, Redeemer, and Governor of all things, let some comfortable beams from thy great body of heavenly light descend on us, to illuminate our dark minds,

and quicken our dead hearts; to inflame us with ardent love unto thee, and to direct our steps in obedience to thy laws, through the gloomy shades of this world, into that region of eternal light and bliss where thou reignest in perfect glory and majesty, one God ever blessed, world without end. Amen.

SUMMARY OF SERMON II.

1 TIMOTHY, CHAP. IV.—VERSE 8.

GENERAL observations on the devotedness to profit exhibited by men, in the immediate scope of their designs and aim of their actions. The practice being so universal, and men being reasonable creatures, it cannot proceed from mere brutal dotage; but there must be some fair color or semblance of reason which carries them on this way. The reason is obvious enough; the very name of profit implies it, signifying that which is useful, or conducive to purposes really or seemingly good. The gain of money, or of something equivalent to it, why this is specially termed profit explained.

If therefore a project should be proposed to us very feasible and probable to succeed, in the pursuit of which we might assuredly obtain great profit, we should only act consistently with ourselves and our usual manner of acting, if we readily embraced it. Such a project is proposed by a very skilful judge of such things in the text; one which will bring to us gains unspeakably great, in comparison of which all other designs of men are unprofitable, or even detrimental.

This project briefly stated is to be religious or pious; that is, in our minds stedfastly to believe on God, in our hearts earnestly to love and reverence him, and throughout our practice diligently to observe his laws: this is recommended by St. Paul, as *profitable for all things;* and this it will be shown is really so.

A main obstruction to the practice of piety is, that it has been taken not for a friend, but rather for an enemy to profit;

and there are many semblances which countenance such an opinion: this instanced in religion seeming to smother or to slacken the industry and alacrity of men with regard to worldly profit, by charging them to be content with a little, and careful for nothing, by diverting their affections from worldly affairs, &c.

Also in our observing that bad men often thrive by impious courses, while good men seem to suffer for their very goodness. This also furthers the prejudice, that some persons, void of true piety, mere dabblers in religion, do not from their slight and superficial performances feel such returns as they expected.

To these considerations, thus disadvantageous to piety, may be added, that the constant certain profits which proceed from it, are not so gross and palpable that men, vitiated in their tastes, and blinded by error, can discern their worth, or relish their sweetness.

For destroying which prejudices, and recommending St. Paul's project, some of the innumerable advantages are considered, by which the great profitableness of piety will appear: and first those which are more universal in their nature; next those which seem to be more particular, though their influence is very extensive.

I. First then, piety is exceedingly useful for all sorts of men, in all capacities, states, and relations, fitting them to discharge all their duties in a proper, just, and decent manner. This shown in the peculiar duties of superiors, inferiors, princes, subjects, parents, children, husbands, wives, and friends. It renders all men faithful to their trusts, just and punctual in their dealings, orderly and courteous in their behavior. It ties all relations more fastly, augments all endearments, and enforces all obligations by the firm bonds of conscience, &c.

In consequence of those practices which spring from it, piety removes oppression, violence, faction, murmurings, out of the state; schisms and scandal out of the church; pride,

luxury, and sycophancy out of the court; corruption out of judicatures; tumults out of the street; brawlings and jealousies out of families; extortion out of trade; strife, emulation, and foul language out of conversation, &c. It is the best prop and guard of government; for it settles the body politic in a sound constitution of health, and firmly cements all the parts thereof: it is therefore the interest of all men, who *desire to live well, and would fain see good days*, especially of the great and those in authority, to promote piety as the best instrument of their security: this topic enlarged on.

II. Secondly, piety fits a man for all conditions, qualifying him to pass through them with the best advantage, wisely, cheerfully, and safely. Is a man prosperous, high, or wealthy? Piety guards him from all the mischiefs incident to that condition, and disposes him to enjoy its best advantages: this point enlarged on. Is he poor and low in the world? Piety improves and sweetens even that state, keeping his spirits above dejection, and freeing him from all grievous anxiety; showing him that although he may seem to have but little, yet he has a certain succor and never-failing supply in God's good providence, &c.

Difference between a pious and an impious man, under similar circumstances of adversity, pointed out. Example of our Lord's Apostles under their ministry proposed to us.

III. Thirdly, piety virtually comprises within itself all other profits, serving the designs of them all: whatever kind of desirable good we can hope to find from any other profit, we may be assured to find from it. He that hath it, shown to be *ipso facto* rich, intitled to immense treasures of the most precious wealth; also to be in truth most honorable. The pious man shown to be most powerful. Shown also to enjoy the only true pleasures, hearty, pure, solid, and durable. As for *safety*, the pious man hath it most absolute and sure, *resting under the shadow of God's wings.* As for liberty, he most

intirely and truly enjoys it, for he alone is free from captivity to sin and Satan: with respect to ease, he alone knows it, having his mind exempt from the distraction of care, the disorder of passion, the anguish of conscience, &c. As for knowlege, he alone attains it to any purpose. *Evil men*, says the wise man himself, *understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things.* Farther, the pious man is enabled and disposed most to benefit and oblige others: this point enlarged on. Thus all the fruits and consequences of profit, which engage men so eagerly to pursue it, do in the best kind and highest degree result from piety.

As for all other profits unconnected with it, they are but imaginary and counterfeit, yielding only painted shows instead of substantial fruit. This instanced in the seeking of profit from bare worldly wealth—from worldly power—from the enjoyment of pleasure. If the mere worldly man fancies safety, he deludes himself; if he thirst for liberty, he will be frustrated: ease he cannot obtain under the burthen of sin, of care and trouble: if he means to acquire wisdom, he will find that wisdom and impiety are incompatible things: in fine, he will be mistaken and disappointed in all his projects, whosoever fancies any true profit without piety: this point enlarged on.

IV. Fourthly, that commendation is not to be omitted which is nearest at hand, and suggested by St. Paul himself, to back his assertion concerning the universal profitableness of piety; *for*, says he, *it hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

As for the blessings of this life, though God has not promised to load the godly man with affluence of worldly things, to pamper the flesh and gratify the wanton fancy, &c.; yet there is no good thing which a man naturally desires, or reasonably can wish for, which is not in express terms proposed as a reward, or as a result of piety. Extracts from holy writ. This stated to be a liberal dispensation even of temporal good

things: it is indeed more frequently, abundantly, and explictly promised to God's ancient people, as an ingredient in the covenant made with him, and a recompense for an external performance of their law. The gospel does not so clearly propound it, nor so much insist on it, as it does not principally belong to the evangelical covenant; yet as the celestial blessings, though not openly tendered in the Jewish law, were mystically couched therein, and closely designed for the spiritual and hearty practisers of religion; so is the collation of temporal accommodations to be understood as belonging to all pious Christians. There is a codicil, as it were, annexed to the New Testament, in which God signifies his intention to furnish his children with all that is needful and convenient for them: his bounty does not fail us even here. This shown from various texts of Scripture. Thus is piety profitable as having the promises of this life; but infinitely more so is it as having *the promises of the life to come*, or as procuring a title to those incomparably more excellent blessings of the other world, that *incorruptible, undefiled, and never fading inheritance, reserved for us in heaven:* this topic enlarged on. Infinitely profitable then must that be which procureth those things for us; and in these respects great reason had St. Paul to say, that godliness is profitable for all things.

SERMON II.

THE PROFITABLENESS OF GODLINESS.

I TIMOTHY, CHAP. IV.—VERSE 8.

——But godliness is profitable for all things.

How generally men, with most unanimous consent, are devoted to profit, as to the immediate scope of their designs and aim of their doings, if with the slightest attention we view what is acted on this theatre of human affairs, we cannot but discern. All that we see men so very serious and industrious about, which we call business; that which they trudge for in the streets, which they work or wait for in the shops, which they meet and crowd for at the exchange, which they sue for in the hall, and solicit for at the court, which they plough and dig for, which they march and fight for in the field, which they travel for at land, and sail for (among rocks and storms) on the sea, which they plod for in the closet, and dispute for in the schools, (yea, may we not add, which they frequently pray for and preach for in the church?) what is it but profit?* Is it not this apparently, for which men so eagerly contest and quarrel, so bitterly envy and emulate, so fiercely clamor and inveigh, so cunningly supplant and undermine one another; which stuffeth their hearts with mutual hatred and spite, which tippeth their tongues with slander and reproach, which often embrueth their hands with blood and slaughter; for which they expose their lives and limbs to danger, for which they undergo grievous toils and drudgeries, for which they distract

* Φεῦ, δύ' ὀβολὼ ὡς μέγα δύνασθον πανταχοῦ. Aristoph. Plut.

their mind with cares, and pierce their heart with sorrows; to which they sacrifice their present ease and content, yea, to which commonly they prostitute their honor and conscience? This, if you mark it, is the great mistress, which is with so passionate rivality every where wooed and courted; this is the common mark which all eyes aim and all endeavors strike at; this the hire which men demand for all their pains, the prize they hope for all their combats, the harvest they seek from all the year's assiduous labor. This is the bait by which you may inveigle most men any whither; and the most certain sign by which you may prognosticate what any man will do: for mark where his profit is, there will he be. This some professedly and with open face, others slily and under thin veils of pretence, (under guise of friendship, of love to public good, of loyalty, of religious zeal;) some directly and in a plain track, others obliquely and by subtile trains; some by sordid and base means, others in ways more cleanly and plausible; some gravely and modestly, others wildly and furiously; all (very few excepted) in one manner or another, do clearly in most of their proceedings level and drive at.*

This practice then being so general, and seeing that men are reasonable creatures, that it is so cannot surely proceed from mere brutishness or dotage; there must be some fair color or semblance of reason, which draweth men into, and carrieth them forward in this way. The reason indeed is obvious and evident enough; the very name of profit implieth it, signifying that which is useful or conducible to purposes really or seemingly good. The gain of money, or of somewhat equivalent thereto, is therefore specially termed profit, because it readily supplieth necessity, furnisheth convenience, feedeth pleasure, satisfieth fancy and curiosity, promoteth ease and liberty, supporteth honor and dignity, procureth power, dependencies, and friendships, rendereth a man somebody considerable in the world; in fine, enableth to do good, or to perform works of beneficence and charity. Profit is therefore so much affected

* Prima fere vota, et cunctis notissima templis,
Divitiæ ut crescant, &c.—Juv. Sat. x.

Omnes ad affectum atque appetitum utilitatis suæ naturæ ipsius magisterio atque impulsione ducantur.—Salv. ad Eccl. Cath. 2.

and pursued, because it is, or doth seem, apt to procure or promote some good desirable to us.

If therefore a project should be proposed to us very feasible and probable to succeed, in pursuance whereof assuredly we might obtain great profit; methinks in consistence with ourselves, and conformably to our usual manner of acting, we should be very ready to embrace and execute it. Such a project it is which in my text, by a very trusty voucher and skilful judge of such things, and one who had himself fully experimented it, is proposed: which in itself is very practicable, so that any of us may, if we have a mind to it and will be at the pains, throughly compass and carry it on; which will exceedingly turn to account, and bring in gains unto us unspeakably vast; in comparison whereto all other designs which men with so much care and toil do pursue, are very unprofitable or detrimental, yielding but shadows of profit, or bringing real damage to us.

It is briefly this, to be religious or pious; that is, in our minds stedfastly to believe on God (such as nature in some measure, and revelation more clearly, declareth him,) in our hearts earnestly to love and reverence him, through all our practice sincerely and diligently to observe his laws. This is it which St. Paul affirmeth to be 'profitable for all things,' and which it is my intent, by God's help, to recommend unto you as such; demonstrating it really to be so, by representing some of those numberless benefits and advantages which accrue from it, extending to all conditions and capacities of men, to all states, all seasons, and in effect to all affairs of life.

It hath been ever a main obstruction to the practice of piety, that it hath been taken for no friend, or rather for an enemy to profit; as both unprofitable and prejudicial to its followers: and many semblances there are countenancing that opinion. For religion seemeth to smother or to slacken the industry and alacrity of men in following profit many ways: by charging them to be content with a little, and careful for nothing; by diverting their affections and cares from worldly affairs to matters of another nature, place, and time, prescribing in the first place to seek things spiritual, heavenly, and future; by disparaging all secular wealth, as a thing, in comparison to virtue and spiritual goods, very mean and inconsiderable; by check-

ing greedy desires and aspiring thoughts after it; by debarring the most ready ways of getting it, (violence, exaction, fraud, and flattery,) yea, straitening the best ways, eager care and diligence; by commending strict justice in all cases, and always taking part with conscience when it clasheth with interest; by paring away the largest uses of wealth, in the prohibition of its free enjoyment to pride or pleasure; by injoining liberal communication thereof in ways of charity and mercy; by engaging men to expose their goods sometimes to imminent hazard, sometimes to certain loss; obliging them to forsake all things, and to embrace poverty for its sake.

It favoreth this conceit to observe that often bad men by impious courses do appear to thrive and prosper; while good men seem for their goodness to suffer, or to be nowise visibly better for it, enduring much hardship and distress.

It furthereth the prejudice that some persons void of true piety or imperfectly good, (some dabblers in religion,) do not from their lame, slight, and superficial performances, feel satisfactory returns, such as they did presume to find; and thence, to the defamation of piety, are apt to say with those men in the prophet, 'It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?' Yea, that sometimes very pious men, being out of humor and somewhat discomposed by the urgent pressures of affliction, the disappointments and crosses incident to all men here in this region of trouble, are apt to complain and express themselves dissatisfied, saying with Job, 'It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God. What advantage will it be unto me, and what profit shall I have if I be cleansed from my sin?' or with David, 'Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency: for all the day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning.'

To these considerations, disadvantageous in this respect to piety, may be added, that the constant and certain profits emergent from it (although incomparably more substantial, and to the mind more sensible than any other) are not yet so gross and palpable, that men, who from being immersed in earth and flesh are blind in error, dull of apprehension, vain and inconsi-

derate in their judgments, tainted and vitiated in their palates, can discern their worth, or relish their sweetness. Hence it is that so many follow the judgment and practice of those in Job, 'who say unto God, depart from us; for we desire not the knowlege of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?'

For voiding which prejudices, and the recommendation of St. Paul's project, I shall, as I said, propose some of those innumerable advantages, by considering which the immense profitableness of piety will appear. And first I shall mention those considerations, which more plainly do import universality; then shall touch some benefits thereof, seeming more particular; yet in effect vastly large, and of a very diffusive influence.

I. First then, we may consider that piety is exceeding useful for all sorts of men, in all capacities, all states, all relations; fitting and disposing them to manage all their respective concernments, to discharge all their peculiar duties, in a proper, just, and decent manner.

It rendereth all superiors equal and moderate in their administrations; mild, courteous, and affable in their converse; benign and condescensive in all their demeanor toward their inferiors.

Correspondently it disposeth inferiors to be sincere and faithful, modest, loving, respectful, diligent, apt willingly to yield due subjection and service.

It inclineth princes to be just, gentle, benign, careful for their subjects' good, apt to administer justice uprightly, to protect right, to encourage virtue, to check wickedness.

Answerably it rendereth subjects loyal, submissive, obedient, quiet, and peaceable, ready to yield due honor, to pay the tributes and bear the burdens imposed, to discharge all duties, and observe all laws prescribed by their governors, conscionably, patiently, cheerfully, without reluctancy, grudging, or murmuring.

It maketh parents loving, gentle, provident for their children's good education and comfortable subsistence; children again, dutiful, respectful, grateful, apt to requite their parents.

Husbands from it become affectionate and compliant to their wives; wives submissive and obedient to their husbands.

It disposeth friends to be friends indeed, full of cordial affection and good-will, intirely faithful, firmly constant, industriously careful and active in performing all good offices mutually.

It engageth men to be diligent in their calling, faithful to their trusts, contented and peaceable in their station, and thereby serviceable to the public good.

It rendereth all men just and punctual in their dealing, orderly and quiet in their behavior, courteous and complaisant in their conversation, friendly and charitable on all occasions, apt to assist, to relieve, to comfort one another.

It tieth all relations more fastly and strongly, assureth and augmenteth all endearments, enforceth and establisheth all obligations by the firm bands of conscience; set aside which no engagement can hold sure against temptations of interest or pleasure. Much difference there is between performing these duties out of natural temper, fear of punishment, hope of temporal reward, selfish design, regard to credit, or other the like principles, and the discharging them out of religious conscience: this alone will keep men tight, uniform, resolute, and stable; whereas all other principles are loose and slippery, will soon be shaken and falter.

In consequence to those practices springing from it, piety removeth oppression, violence, faction, disorders, and murmurings, out of the state; schisms and scandals out of the church; pride and haughtiness, sloth and luxury, detraction and sycophantry, out of the court; corruption and partiality out of judicatures; clamors and tumults out of the street; brawlings, grudges, and jealousies out of families; extortion and cozenage out of trade; strifes, emulations, slanderous backbitings, bitter and foul language out of conversation; in all places, in all societies it produceth, it advanceth, it establisheth, order, peace, safety, prosperity, all that is good, all that is lovely or handsome, all that is convenient or pleasant for human society and common life. It is that which, as the wise man saith, 'exalteth a nation;' it is that which 'establisheth a throne.'

It is indeed the best prop and guard that can be of govern-

ment and of the commonweal: for it settleth the body politic in a sound constitution of health; it firmly cementeth the parts thereof; it putteth all things into a right order and steady course. It procureth mutual respect and affection between governors and subjects, whence ariseth safety, ease, and pleasure to both. It rendereth men truly good, (that is, just and honest, sober and considerate, modest and peaceable,) and thence apt, without any constraint or stir, to yield every one their due; not affected to needless change, not disposed to raise any disturbance. It putteth men in good humor, and keepeth them in it; whence things pass smoothly and pleasantly. It cherisheth worth, and encourageth industry; whence virtue florisheth, and wealth is increased; whence the occasions and means of disorder are stopped, the pretences for sedition and faction are cut off. In fine, it certainly procureth the benediction of God, the source of all welfare and prosperity: whence, 'when it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth;' and, 'when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice,' saith the great politician Solomon.

It is therefore the concernment of all men, who, as the psalmist speaketh, 'desire to live well, and would fain see good days:' it is the special interest of great persons, (of the magistracy, the nobility, the gentry, of all persons that have any considerable interest in the world,) who would safely and sweetly enjoy their dignity, power, or wealth, by all means to protect and promote piety, as the best instrument of their security, and undisturbedly enjoying the accommodations of their state. It is in all respects their best wisdom and policy; that which will as well preserve their outward state here, as satisfy their consciences within, and save their souls hereafter. All the Machiavelian arts and tricks, all the sleights and fetches of worldly craft, do signify nothing in comparison to this one plain and easy way of securing and furthering their interests.

If then it be a gross absurdity to desire the fruits, and not to take care of the root, not to cultivate the stock, whence they sprout; if every prince gladly would have his subjects loyal and obedient, every master would have his servants honest, diligent, and observant, every parent would have his children

officious and grateful, every man would have his friend faithful and kind, every one would have those just and sincere, with whom he doth negociate or converse; if any one would choose to be related to such, and would esteem their relation a happiness; then consequently should every man in reason strive to further piety, from whence alone those good dispositions and practices do proceed.

II. Piety doth fit a man for all conditions, qualifying him to pass through them all with the best advantage, wisely, cheerfully, and safely; so as to incur no considerable harm or detriment by them.

Is a man prosperous, high, or wealthy in condition? Piety guardeth him from all the mischiefs incident to that state, and disposeth him to enjoy the best advantages thereof. It keepeth him from being swelled and puffed up with vain conceit, from being transported with fond complacence or confidence therein; minding him that it is purely the gift of God, that it absolutely dependeth on his disposal, so that it may soon be taken from him; and that he cannot otherwise than by humility, by gratitude, by the good use of it, be secure to retain it; minding him also that he shall assuredly be forced to render a strict account concerning the good management thereof. It preserveth him from being perverted or corrupted with the temptations to which that condition is most liable; from luxury, from sloth, from stupidity, from forgetfulness of God, and of himself; maintaining among the floods of plenty a sober and steady mind. It fenceth him from insolence, and fastuous contempt of others; rendereth him civil, condescensive, kind and helpful to those who are in a meaner state. It instructeth and inciteth him to apply his wealth and power to the best uses, to the service of God, to the benefit of his neighbor, for his own best reputation, and most solid comfort. It is the right ballast of prosperity, the only antidote for all the inconveniences of wealth; that which secureth, sweeteneth, and sanctifieth all other goods: without it all apparent goods are very noxious, or extremely dangerous; riches, power, honor, ease, pleasure, are so many poisons, or so many snares, without it. Again, is a man poor and low in the world? Piety doth improve and sweeten even that state: it keepeth his spirits up above dejec-

tion, desperation, and disconsolateness; it freeth him from all grievous solicitude and anxiety; showing him, that although he seemeth to have little, yet he may be assured to want nothing, he having a certain succor and never-failing supply from God's good providence; that, notwithstanding the present straitness of his condition or scantness of outward things, he hath a title to goods infinitely more precious and more considerable. A pious man cannot but apprehend himself like the child of a most wealthy, kind, and careful father, who, although he hath yet nothing in his own possession, or passing under his name, yet is assured that he can never come into any want of what is needful to him: the Lord of all things (who hath all things in heaven and earth at his disposal, who is infinitely tender of his children's good, who doth incessantly watch over them) being his gracious Father, how can he fear to be left destitute, or not to be competently provided for, as is truly best for him?

This is the difference between a pious and an impious man. Is the pious man in need? he hath then an invisible refuge to fly to, an invisible store to furnish him; he hath somewhat beyond all present things to hope in, to comfort himself with; whereas the impious person hath nothing beside present appearances to support or solace himself by; the which failing, down he sinketh into dejection and despair. Is the good man in affliction? he knoweth that it cometh not on him without God's wise appointment, nor without good intention toward him, for probation, exercise, and improvement of his virtues, or for wholesome correction of his bad dispositions; that it is only physic and discipline to him, which shall have a comfortable issue; that it shall last no longer than it is expedient for him that it should: wherefore he patiently submitteth to it, and undergoeth it cheerfully, with the same mind wherewith a patient swalloweth down an unsavory potion, which he presumeth will conduce to his health.* Never, indeed, hath any man enjoyed more real content, or hath been more truly satisfied, than good men have been in a seeming depth of ad-

* Scimus amicos Dei ab amantissimo, misericordissimo Patre Deo mala ista pœnalia recipere, non ut pœnam seu vindictam ira-

versity. What men ever on earth have been more sorely afflicted, have underwent greater losses, disgraces, labors, troubles, distresses in any kind, than did the holy Apostles? Yet did they most heartily rejoice, exult, and triumph in them all.* Such a wondrous virtue hath piety to change all things into matter of consolation and joy. No condition in effect can be evil or sad to a pious man: his very sorrows are pleasant, his infirmities are wholesome, his wants enrich him, his disgraces adorn him, his burdens ease him; his duties are privileges, his falls are the grounds of advancement, his very sins (as breeding contrition, humility, circumspection, and vigilance,) do better and profit him: whereas impiety doth spoil every condition, doth corrupt and embase all good things, doth embitter all the conveniences and comforts of life.

III. Piety doth virtually comprise within it all other profits, serving all the designs of them all: whatever kind or desirable good we can hope to find from any other profit, we may be assured to enjoy from it.

He that hath it is *ipso facto* vastly rich, is intitled to immense treasures of most precious wealth; in comparison whereto all the gold and all the jewels in the world are mere baubles. He hath interest in God, and can call him his, who is the *all*, and in regard to whom all things existent are 'less than nothing.' The infinite power and wisdom of God belong to him, to be ever, on all fit occasions, employed for his benefit. All the inestimable treasures of heaven (a place infinitely more rich than the Indies) are his, after this moment of life, to have and to hold for ever: so that great reason had the wise man to say, that 'in the house of the righteous is much treasure.' Piety therefore is profitable, as immediately instating in wealth: and whereas the desired fruits of profit are chiefly these, honor, power, pleasure, safety, liberty, ease, opportunity of getting knowlege, means of benefiting others; all these we

cundiæ, sed magis ut correctiones et medicamenta stultitiæ, et adjumenta virtutis, ut malleationes sive fabricationes, et tunsiones, sive ablutiones, et candidationes.—Guil. Par. de Sacram.

* Ἐκείνους μὲν γὰρ ἐπεκούφιζεν ἡ χαρὰ τῆς μαρτυρίας, καὶ ἡ ἐλπὶς τῶν ἐπηγγελμένων, καὶ ἡ πρὸς τὸν Χριστὸν ἀγάπη, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πατρικόν.—Euseb. v. 1. Mart. Lugd.

shall see do abundantly accrue from piety, and in truth only from it.

The pious man is in truth most honorable. *Inter homines pro summo est optimus*, saith Seneca, Ep. xc. whom Solomon translateth thus; 'the righteous is more excellent than his neighbor.' He is dignified by the most illustrious titles, a son of God, a friend and favorite to the Sovereign King of the world, an heir of heaven, a denizen of the Jerusalem above:* titles far surpassing all those which worldly state doth assume. He is approved by the best and most infallible judgments, wherein true honor resideth. He is respected by God himself, by the holy angels, by the blessed saints, by all good and all wise persons: yea, commonly, by all men: for the effects of genuine piety are so venerable and amiable, that scarce any man can do otherwise than in his heart much esteem him that worketh them.

The pious man is also the most potent man; he hath a kind of omnipotency, because he can do whatever he will, that is, what he ought to do;† and because the Divine Power is ever ready to assist him in his pious enterprises, so that 'he can do all things by Christ that strengtheneth him.' He is able to combat and vanish him that is ὁ ἰσχυρὸς, 'the stout and mighty one;' to wage war with happy success 'against principalities and powers.' He conquereth and commandeth himself, which is the bravest victory and noblest empire: he quelleth fleshly lusts, subdueth inordinate passions, and repelleth strong temptations. He 'by his faith overcometh the world' with a conquest far more glorious than ever any Alexander or Cæsar could. He, in fine, doth perform the most worthy exploits, and deserveth the most honorable triumphs that man can do.

The pious man also doth enjoy the only true pleasures; hearty, pure, solid, durable pleasures; such pleasures as those, of which the divine psalmist singeth: 'In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore: that 'all joy in believing,' that 'gaiety of hope,' that incessant

* Κατ' ἀλήθειαν ὁ ἀγαθὸς μόνος τιμητός.—Aristot. Eth. iii. 3.

† Tantum quantum vult potest, qui se nisi quod debet non putat posse.—Senec. Ep. xc.

'rejoicing in the Lord,' and 'greatly delighting in his law,' that continual feast of a good conscience, that 'serving the Lord with gladness,' that 'exceeding gladness with God's countenance,' that 'comfort of the Holy Spirit,' that 'joy unspeakable and full of glory;' the satisfaction resulting from the contemplation of heavenly truth, from the sense of God's favor, and the pardon of his sins, from the influence of God's grace, from the hopes and anticipation of everlasting bliss; these are pleasures indeed, in comparison whereto all other pleasures are no more than brutish sensualities, sordid impurities, superficial touches, transient flashes of delight; such as should be insipid and unsavory to a rational appetite; such as are tinctured with sourness and bitterness, have painful remorses or qualms consequent.* All the pious man's performances of duty and of devotion are full of pure satisfaction and delight here, they shall be rewarded with perfect and endless joy hereafter.

As for safety, the pious man hath it most absolute and sure; he being guarded by Almighty power and wisdom; 'resting under the shadow of God's wings;' God 'upholding him with his hand, ordering his steps, so that none of them shall slide, holding his soul in life, and suffering not his feet to be moved;' he being, by the grace and mercy of God, secured from the assaults and impressions of all enemies, from sin and guilt, from the devil, world, and flesh, from death and hell, which are our most formidable, and in effect only dangerous enemies.

As for liberty, the pious man most intirely and truly doth enjoy that; he alone is free from captivity to that cruel tyrant Satan, from the miserable slavery to sin, from the grievous dominion of lust and passion. He can do what he pleaseth, having a mind to do only what is good and fit. The law he observeth is worthily called the 'perfect law of liberty:' the Lord he serveth pretendeth only to command freemen and friends:

* Quid enim jucundius, quam Dei Patris et Domini reconciliatio, quam veritatis revelatio, quam errorum recognitio, quam tot retro criminum venia? quæ major voluptas, quam fastidium ipsius voluptatis, quam sæculi totius contemptus, quam vera libertas, quam conscientia integra, quam vita sufficiens, quam mortis timor nullus, &c.? —Tert. de Spectac. 29.

'Ye are my friends,' said he, 'if ye do whatever I command you:' and 'if the Son set you free, then are ye free indeed.'*

And for ease, it is he only that knoweth it; having his mind exempted from the distraction of care, from disorder of passion, from anguish of conscience, from the drudgeries and troubles of the world, from the vexations and disquiets which sin produceth. He findeth it made good to him, which our Lord inviting him did promise, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:' he feeleth the truth of those divine assertions, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee:' and 'great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.'

As for knowlege, the pious man alone doth attain it considerably, so as to become truly wise and learned to purpose. 'Evil men,' said the wise man himself, who knew well, 'understand not judgment; but they that seek the Lord understand all things.' It is the pious man that employeth his mind on the most proper and worthy objects, that knoweth things which certainly best deserve to be known, that hath his soul enriched with the choicest notions; he skilleth to aim at the best ends, and to compass them by the fittest means; he can assign to each thing its due worth and value; he can prosecute things by the best methods, and order his affairs in the best manner; so that he is sure not to be defeated or disappointed in his endeavors, nor to misspend his care and pains without answerable fruit. He hath the best master to instruct him in his studies, and the best rules to direct him in his proceedings: he cannot be mistaken, seeing in his judgment and choice of things he conspireth with infallible wisdom. Therefore ὁ εὐσεβῶν ἄκρως φιλοσοφεῖ, 'the pious man is the exquisite philosopher.' 'The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.' 'The fear of the Lord' (as is said again and again in Scripture) 'is the head (or top) of wisdom.' 'A good understanding have all they that keep his commandments.'

Farther: the pious man is enabled and disposed (hath the

* Οὐ γάρ ἐστιν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐλεύθερος, ἀλλ' ἢ μόνος ὁ Χριστῷ ζῶν.—Chrysost. ad Theod.

power and the heart) most to benefit and oblige others. He doth it by his succor and assistance, by his instruction and advice, which he is ever ready to yield to any man on fit occasion: he doth it by the direction and encouragement of his good example: he doth it by his constant and earnest prayers for all men: he doth it by drawing down blessings from heaven on the place where he resideth. He is on all accounts the most true, the most common benefactor to mankind; all his neighbors, his country, the world, are in some way or other obliged to him: at least he doth all the good he can, and in wish doth benefit all men.

Thus all the fruits and consequences of profit, the which engage men so eagerly to pursue it, do in the best kind and highest degree result from piety, and indeed only from it. All the philosophical bravados concerning a wise man being only rich, only honorable, only happy, only above fortune, are verified in the pious man: to him alone, as such, with a sure foundation, without vanity with evident reason, those aphorisms may be applied. They are paradoxes and fictions abstracting from religion, or considering men only under the light and power of nature: but supposing our religion true, a good Christian soberly, without arrogance, in proportion and according to the measure of his piety, may assume them to himself as the holy Apostles did: 'I possess all things, I can do all things,' he may in a sort say after St. Paul.

As for all other profits, secluding it, they are but imaginary and counterfeit, mere shadows and illusions, yielding only painted shows instead of substantial fruit.

If from bare worldly wealth (that which usurpeth the name of profit here) a man seeketh honor, he is deluded, for he is not thereby truly honorable; he is but a shining earth-worm, a well-trapped ass, a gaudy statue, a theatrical grandee: with God, who judgeth most rightly, he is mean and despicable: no intelligent person can inwardly respect him. Even here, in this world of fallacy and dotage, the wisest and soberest men, whose judgment usually doth sway that of others, cannot but contemn him, as master of no real good, nor fit for any good purpose; as seeing that in the end he will prove most beggarly and wretched.

If a man affecteth power thence, he is grievously mistaken: for, instead thereof, he proveth exceedingly feeble and impotent, able to perform nothing worthy a man, subject to fond humors and passions, servant to divers lusts and pleasures, captivated by the Devil at his pleasure, overborne by temptation, hurried by the stream of the world, and liable to the strokes of fortune.

If he propoundeth to himself thence the enjoyment of pleasure, he will also much fail therein: for in lieu thereof he shall find care and trouble, surfeiting and disease, wearisome satiety and bitter regret; being void of all true delight in his mind, satisfaction in his conscience; nothing here being able to furnish solid and stable pleasure.

If he fancieth safety, he deludeth himself: for how can he be safe, who is destitute of God's protection and succor; who is the object of divine wrath and vengeance; who is assailed by many fierce and powerful enemies; whom the roaring lion is ready to devour; whom death and sudden destruction are coming to seize on; whom guilt threateneth, and hell gapeth for; who without any guard or fence standeth exposed to such imminent, such horrid and ghastly dangers?

If he thirst for liberty, he will be frustrated; for he can be no otherwise than a slave, while he continueth impious; *servus tot dominorum, quot vitiorum*, a slave to so many masters as he keepeth vices: a slave to himself and his own lusts: carrying about with him the fetters of unsatiable desire, being hampered with inconsistent and irregular affections.

Ease he cannot obtain, being oppressed with unwieldy burdens of sin, of care, of trouble; being tossed with restless agitations of lust and passion; being 'like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.'

If he meaneth to get wisdom, he is out; for wisdom and impiety are incompatible things. All his knowlege is vain, all his speculations are no better than dreams, seeing he erreth in the main point, and is 'not wise to salvation.'

He is, in fine, extremely mistaken, and in all his projects will be lamentably disappointed, whoever fancieth any true profit without piety: he never can attain to be so much as wealthy; but drudge and plod what he can, must be a beggar

and a forlorn wretch. For how can he be any wise rich, who doth want all the best things, the only valuable things in the world, which any man may have, which any good man doth possess? How can he be rich, who is destitute of the most needful accommodations of life; who constantly feedeth on the coarsest and most sordid fare, (the dust of pelf, the dung of sensuality;) who hath no faithful or constant friends, (nothing earthly can be such;) who is master of nothing but dirt, or chaff, or smoke? Whereas also riches do consist, not in what one enjoyeth at present, (for that can be little,) but in a presumed ability to enjoy afterward what he may come to need or desire; or in well-grounded hopes that he shall never fall into want or distress. How can that man be rich, who hath not any confidence in God, any interest in him, any reason to expect his blessing? yea, who hath much ground to fear the displeasure of him, in whose hand all things are, and who arbitrarily disposeth of all? Piety therefore is the only profitable thing according to just esteem. 'She is more precious than rubies, and all the things we can desire are not to be compared to her.' On this account it is most true, what the Psalmist affirmeth, 'a little that the righteous hath is better than great riches of the ungodly.'

IV. That commendation is not to be omitted which is nearest at hand, and suggested by St. Paul himself to back this assertion concerning the universal profitableness of piety; 'For,' saith he, 'it hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come:' that is, God hath promised to reward it with blessings appertaining to this mortal life, and with those which concern the future eternal state.

As for the blessings of this life, although God hath not promised to load the godly man with affluence of worldly things, not to put him into a splendid and pompous garb, not to dispense to him that which may serve for pampering the flesh, or gratifying wanton fancy, not to exempt him from all the inconveniences to which human nature and this worldly state are subject; yet hath he promised to furnish him with whatever is needful or convenient for him, in due measure and season, the which he doth best understand. There is no good thing which a man naturally desireth or reasonably can wish for, which

is not in express terms proposed as a reward, or a result of piety.

In general it is declared that 'blessings are on the head of the just;' that 'no good thing God will withhold from them that walk uprightly;' that whatever otherwise doth fall out, it 'assuredly shall be well with them that fear God;' that 'blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways:'—'happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee;' that 'there shall no evil happen to the just;' that 'all things work together for good to them that love God.'

Particularly there are promised to the pious man,

A supply of all wants.—'The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish.' 'The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul.' 'There is no want to them that fear God.' 'The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.'

A protection in all dangers.—'The eye of the Lord is on them that fear him, on them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.' 'There shall no evil befal thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling: he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.'

Guidance in all his undertakings and proceedings.—'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.' 'None of his steps shall slide.' 'In all thy ways acknowlege him, and he shall direct thy paths.'

Success and prosperity in his designs.—'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' 'Whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.' 'Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established; and the light shall shine on thy ways.' 'The Lord shall command a blessing on thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thy hand unto.' 'Thine expectation shall not be cut off.'

Comfortable enjoying the fruits of his industry.—'Thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands.'

Satisfaction of all reasonable desires.—'The desire of the righteous shall be granted.' 'Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.' 'He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he will hear their cry, and will save them.'

Firm peace and quiet.—'The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever.' 'Great peace have they which love thy law.' 'The fruit of righteousness is sowed in peace.'

Joy and alacrity.—'Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.' 'In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.'

Support and comfort in afflictions.—'He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.' 'Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.'

Deliverance from trouble.—'Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.' 'He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken.'

Preservation and recovery from mishaps, or miscarriages.—'Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.'

Preferment of all sorts, to honor and dignity, to wealth and prosperity.—'Wait on the Lord, and keep his way; and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.' 'By humility and fear of the Lord, are riches and honor.' 'Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord—wealth and riches are in his house.' 'The upright shall have good things in possession.' 'If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasure.' 'The tabernacle of the righteous shall florish.'

Long life.—'The fear of the Lord prolongeth days.' 'By me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.' 'Let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add unto thee.'

A good name enduring after death.—'The memory of the just is blessed.'

Blessings entailed on posterity.—'His seed shall be mighty on earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.' 'The root of the righteous shall not be moved.'

Thus is a liberal dispensation even of temporal goods annexed by God's infallible word unto the practice of piety. It is in-

deed more frequently, abundantly, and explicitly promised unto God's ancient people, as being a conditional ingredient of the covenant made with them, exhibited in that as a recompense of their external performance of religious works prescribed in their law. The gospel doth not so clearly propound it, or so much insist on it as not principally belonging to the evangelical covenant, the which, in reward to the performance of its conditions by us, peculiarly doth offer blessings spiritual, and relating to the future state; as also scarce deserving to be mentioned in comparison to those superior blessings. Yet as the celestial benefits, although not openly tendered in the Jewish law, were yet mystically couched therein, and closely designed for the spiritual and hearty practisers of religion; so is the collation of temporal accommodations to be understood to belong to all pious Christians: there is a codicil, as it were, annexed to the New Testament, in which God signifieth his intention to furnish his children with all that is needful or convenient for them. His providence hath not ceased to watch over us, his bounty doth not fail toward us even in this respect; his care will not be wanting to feed us and clothe us comfortably, to protect us from evil, to prosper our good undertakings. Hence doth he command us to care for nothing, but 'to cast our care on him, to recommend our business to him, because he careth for us;' 'he will never forsake us;' he will hear our prayers, and help us. Hence we are injoined 'not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.' Hence it is said that 'the divine power hath given us all things pertaining unto life and godliness, through the knowlege of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.' Hence it is promised by our Lord, that, 'if we seek first the kingdom of God, all things shall be added to us.' Hence it is inferred, as consequential to the nature of the evangelical dispensation, that we cannot want any good thing; 'He,' saith St. Paul, 'that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' In fine, hence it is proposed as notorious, that nothing is permitted to fall out otherwise than as conduceth to our good. 'We know,' saith St. Paul, 'that all things work together for good unto those that love God:' nor 'will God,' in any case, 'suffer

us to be tempted,' by any want or pressure, 'beyond what we are able to bear.' Thus is piety evidently profitable, as 'having the promises of this life,' or exhibiting all temporal blessings desirable to the practisers thereof.

But infinitely more profitable it is, as 'having the promises of the future life,' or as procuring a title to those incomparably more excellent blessings of the other world; those 'indefectible treasures,' that 'incorruptible, undefiled, and never-fading inheritance, reserved in heaven for us;' that 'exceeding weight of glory;' those 'ineffable joys of paradise;' that lightsome countenance and beatifying presence of God; that unconceivably and unexpressibly joyful, glorious, perfect, and endless bliss; briefly, all that is comprised and intimated in those words of the Apostle, 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' Infinitely profitable surely must that be, which procureth those things for us: and in these respects great reason had St. Paul to say that 'godliness is profitable for all things.'

But farther, to evidence and recommend this point, I might propound certain peculiar advantages arising from piety, which have a very general influence on our lives, and do afford unto them exceeding benefit: but this I must, in regard to the time and your patience, at present forbear.

SUMMARY OF SERMON III.

I TIMOTHY, CHAP. IV.—VERSE 8.

SOME other considerations proposed, which serve to recommend more particularly the assertion of St. Paul, declaring the great profitableness of religion.

I. We may consider that religion prescribes the truest and best rules of action, enlightening our minds and rectifying our practice on all occasions, &c. Of all things in the world there is nothing more generally profitable than *light:* its benefits described. The like benefits does religion, which is the light of the soul, yield to it: this point enlarged on.

Propriety of acting regularly, uniformly, and consistently, displayed. Evils which beset an untractable profane man who has no bridle of conscience to guide or check him, described: advantages which attend the pious man, who is steadily governed by conscience, and has a regard to certain principles.

What law and government are to the public, that is piety to each man's private state, and to ordinary conversation: it frees a man's own life from disorder, and prompts men to behave themselves towards each other with security and confidence.

And the advantage appears greater, if we consider that the rules which it prescribes for this purpose are the best that can be; inasmuch as they proceed from infallible wisdom and immense goodness: the beauty and utility of these rules enlarged on. The advantages accruing to a person who adheres to these rules described: the evils which beset him who neglects them. In short, the precepts of religion are no other than such as physicians would prescribe for the health of the

body, politicians for the peace of the state, philosophers for the tranquillity of the mind, &c.

II. We may consider more particularly, that piety yields to him who practises it, internal content, peace, and joy in the highest degree; that it frees him from all kinds of dissatisfaction, regret, and disquiet; which is an inestimable advantage, since the happiness and misery of men are chiefly seated in the mind: this topic enlarged on.

It is shown that from the practice of religion alone, such inward content and pleasure can arise. For all present enjoyments of this world are transient, and of any that are to come there is no assurance. There is nothing here below large enough to fill our vast capacities, to satiate our boundless desires, or to appease our squeamish delicacy: this topic enlarged on.

Boast of the Epicureans, that by discarding the belief and dread of religion, they laid a foundation for tranquillity of mind, shown to be vain.

But the Epicurean's success in subduing religion being granted, it is shown that he will fail in obtaining his desired tranquillity, unless he can also trample down reason, new mould human nature, and subjugate all natural appetites and passions, &c.

It is farther shown, by a distinct survey of all the grounds and sources of content, that religion only can afford it: this is the case, whether content be expected to result from the well governing and ordering of our passions; from a hearty approbation of our own conduct, when we recollect that we have acted according to wisdom, justice, and duty; from a sound and healthy constitution of soul; from good success in our attempts, and from prosperous events befalling us; from security against danger, trouble, want, and all such evils; from sufficiency, real or apprehended.

III. Since happiness, or the *summum bonum*, the utmost

scope of human desire has been mentioned, it may be added, that piety surely confers it, or that happiness, whatever it be, has an essential coherence with piety. These are reciprocal propositions, both of them infallibly true. He that is pious is happy, and he that is happy is pious: this subject enlarged on.

IV. It is a peculiar advantage of piety, that it furnishes employment fit and worthy of us, grateful and beneficial to us. Man being a busy active creature, whose thoughts are in restless motion, and whose desires are ever stretching at somewhat, will always be working good or evil to himself: very profitable therefore to him must that thing be, which determines him to act well, to spend his care and pains on that which is truly advantageous to him, &c. Religion farther considered as an employment most proper for us as reasonable creatures; as an employment most beneficial to us; as an employment most constant, occupying all our faculties; as a sweet and grateful business. In fine, the light of nature has discerned that, were it not for such an employment, this would be a lamentable world to live in. Speech of the Emperor M. Antoninus on this point recorded.

V. A considerable benefit of piety is, that it affords the best friendships and sweetest society, for which man is framed, and without which he cannot well live. It makes God our friend, who is infinitely better than all others; and consequently it engages all creatures in the world to be our friends, or instruments of good to us, according to their several capacities, by the direction and disposal of God: it procures for us the friendship of the good angels, that puissant host of happy spirits: it engages also the blessed saints in glory, *the spirits of men perfected*, the church of the first-born; and it renders all sorts of people our friends: to good men it unites us in holy communion; it reconciles enemies; and by it all conversation becomes tolerable, grateful, or useful. In fine, piety renders a man a true friend and a good companion

to himself, satisfied in himself, able to converse freely and pleasantly with his own thoughts: indeed it is only from want of true piety that solitude is to most men irksome and tedious.

So many, and even more great and precious advantages accrue from piety; whence we may well conclude with St. Paul, that *godliness is profitable for all things*. Final exhortation.

SERMON III.

THE PROFITABLENESS OF GODLINESS.

1 TIMOTHY, CHAP. IV.—VERSE 8.

—— But godliness is profitable for all things.

In discoursing formerly on these words, I did propound divers general considerations, serving to confirm and recommend this assertion of St. Paul. I shall now insist on some others more particular, which yet seem much conducible to the same purpose, declaring the vast utility of religion or piety.

I. We may consider that religion doth prescribe the truest and best rules of action; thence enlightening our mind, and rectifying our practice in all matters, and on all occasions, so that whatever is performed according to it, is done well and wisely, with a comely grace in regard to others, with a cheerful satisfaction in our own mind, with the best assurance that things are here capable of, to find happy success and beneficial fruit.

Of all things in the world there is nothing more generally profitable than light: by it we converse with the world, and have all things set before us; by it we truly and easily discern things in their right magnitude, shape, and color; by it we guide our steps safely in prosecution of what is good, and shunning what is noxious; by it our spirits are comfortably warmed and cheered, our life consequently, our health, our vigor, and activity, are preserved. The like benefits doth religion, which is the light of our soul, yield to it. Pious men are 'children of the light;' pious works are works of light 'shining before men.' 'God's word' (or true religion) 'is a lamp unto

our feet, and a light unto our path;' enabling us to perceive things, and judge rightly of them; teaching us to walk straightly and surely, without erring or stumbling; qualifying us to embrace what is useful, and to avoid hurtful things; preserving our spiritual life, and disposing us to act well with a vigorous alacrity: without it a man is stark blind, and utterly benighted, *gropeth* in doubt, wandereth in mistake, trippeth on all occasions, and often falleth into mischief. 'The path of the just,' saith the wise man, 'is as the shining light.' 'The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble.' 'Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way; but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.'

Again: it is a fair ornament of a man, and a grand convenience both to himself and to others with whom he converseth or dealeth, to act regularly, uniformly, and consistently; freeing a man's self from distraction and irresolution in his mind, from change and confusion in his proceedings; securing others from delusion and disappointment in their transactions with him. Even a bad rule constantly observed is therefore better than none:* order and perseverance in any way seemeth more convenient than roving and tossing about in uncertainties. But, secluding a regard to the precepts of religion, there can hardly be any sure or settled rule, which firmly can engage a man to, or effectually restrain a man from any thing.

There is scarce in nature any thing so wild, so untractable, so unintelligible, as a man who hath no bridle of conscience to guide or check him. A profane man is like a ship, without anchor to stay him, or rudder to steer him, or compass to guide him; so that he is tossed with any wind, and driven with any wave, none knoweth whither; whither bodily temper doth sway him, or passion doth hurry him, or interest doth pull him, or example leadeth him, or company inveigleth and haleth him, or humor transporteth him; whither any such variable and unaccountable causes determine him, or divers of them together distract him: whence he so rambleth and hovereth, that he can seldom himself tell what in any case he should do, nor can

* Via eunti aliquid extremum est; error immensus est.—Sen. Ep. 16.

another guess it; so that you cannot at any time know where to find him, or how to deal with him: you cannot with reason ever rely on him, so 'unstable he is in all his ways.' He is in effect a mere child, all humor and giddiness, somewhat worse than a beast, which, following the instinct of its nature, is constant and regular, and thence tractable; or at least so untractable, that no man will be deceived in meddling with him. Nothing therefore can be more unmanly than such a person, nothing can be more unpleasant than to have to do with him.*

But a pious man, being steadily governed by conscience, and a regard to certain principles, doth both understand himself and is intelligible to others: he presently descrieth what in any case he is to do, and can render an account of his acting: you may know him clearly, and assuredly tell what he will do, and may therefore fully confide in him.†

What therefore law and government are to the public, things necessary to preserve the world in order, peace, and safety, (that men may know what to do, and distinguish what is their own,) that is piety to each man's private state and to ordinary conversation: it freeth a man's own life from disorder and distraction; it prompteth men how to behave themselves toward one another with security and confidence.

This it doth by confining our practice within settled bounds: but this advantage appeareth greater, considering that the rules which it prescribeth are the best that can be. Such they must needs be, as proceeding from infallible wisdom and immense goodness; being indeed no other than laws, which the all-wise and most gracious Lord and Maker of the world, out of tender kindness to his subjects and creatures, with especial regard to our welfare, hath been pleased to enact and declare. What of old he said to the Israelites concerning their laws, may with greater advantage be applied to those which should regulate our lives: 'And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God

* Nihil est tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot ac tam variis affectibus concisum atque laceratum, quam mala mens.—Quint. xii. 1.

† Οἱ ἐπιεικεῖς ἑαυτοῖς ὁμονοοῦσι καὶ ἀλλήλοις, ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ὄντες, ὡς εἰπείν· τῶν τοιούτων μένει γὰρ τὰ βουλήματα, καὶ οὐ μεταῤῥεῖ, ὥσπερ εὔριπος.—Arist. Eth. ix. 6.

require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; to keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?' (For thy good; that was the design of their being commanded; thereto the observance of them did tend.) And that commendation, which by the Levites in Nehemiah is given to that, doth more clearly and fully agree to the Christian (general and perfect) institution: 'Thou camest down from mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.' And, 'the law,' saith the Apostle Paul, 'is holy; the commandment is holy, just, and good:' as such it is recommended to us by its Author, so we Christians are by many great arguments assured that it is, and that it is such even our natural reason dictateth; so (as to the chief instances thereof) the most wise and sober men always have acknowleged, so the general consent doth avow, and so even common experience doth attest. For, heartily to love and reverence the Maker of all things, who by every thing apparent before us demonstrateth himself incomprehensibly powerful, wise, and good, to be kind and charitable to our neighbors, to be just and faithful in our dealings, to be sober and modest in our minds, to be meek and gentle in our demeanors, to be staunch and temperate in our enjoyments, and the like principal rules of duty, are such, that the common reason of men and continual experience do approve them as hugely conducible to the public good of men, and to each man's private welfare. So notoriously beneficial they appear, that for the justification of them we might appeal even to the judgment and conscience of those persons, who are most concerned to derogate from them. For hardly can any man be so senseless, or so lewd, as seriously to disapprove or condemn them, as inwardly to blame or slight those who truly act according to them. The will of men sometimes may be so depraved, that dissolute persons wantonly and heedlessly may scoff at and seem to disparage goodness; that good men by very bad men for doing well may be envied and hated: (their being so treated is commonly an argument of the goodness of their persons and of their ways:) but the understanding

of men can hardly be so corrupted, that piety, charity, justice, temperance, meekness, can in good earnest considerately by any man be disallowed, or that persons apparently practising them can be despised; but rather, in spite of all contrary prejudice and disaffection, such things and such persons cannot but in judgment and heart be esteemed by all men. The lustre of them by a natural and necessary efficacy (like that of heaven's glorious light) dazzleth the sight and charmeth the spirits of all men living; the beauty of them irresistibly conquereth and commandeth in the apprehensions of men: the more they are observed, the more useful and needful they appear for the good of men; all the fruits which grow from the observance of them being to all men's taste very pleasant, to all men's experience very wholesome. Indeed, all the good, whereby common life is adorned, is sweetened, is rendered pleasant and desirable, doth spring thence; all the mischiefs which infest particular men, and which disturb the world, palpably do arise from the transgression or neglect thereof.

If we look on a person sticking to those rules, we shall perceive him to have a cheerful mind and composed passions, to be at peace within, and satisfied with himself; to live in comely order, in good repute, in fair correspondence, and firm concord with his neighbors. If we mark what preserveth the body sound and lusty, what keepeth the mind vigorous and brisk, what saveth and improveth the estate, what upholdeth the good name, what guardeth and graceth a man's whole life; it is nothing else but proceeding in our demeanor and dealings according to the honest and wise rules of piety. If we view a place where these commonly in good measure are observed, we shall discern that peace and prosperity do florish there; that all things proceed on sweetly and fairly; that men generally drive on conversation and commerce together contentedly, delightfully, advantageously, yielding friendly advice and aid mutually, striving to render one another happy; that few clamors or complaints are heard there, few contentions or stirs do appear, few disasters or tragedies do occur; that such a place hath indeed much of the face, much of the substance of Paradise.

But if you mind a person who neglecteth them, you will find

his mind galled with sore remorse, racked with anxious fears and doubts, agitated with storms of passion and lust, living in disorder and disgrace, jarring with others, and no less dissatisfied with himself. If you observe what doth impair the health, doth weaken and fret the mind, doth waste the estate, doth blemish the reputation, doth expose the whole life to danger and trouble; what is it but thwarting these good rules? If you consider a place where these are much neglected, it will appear like a wilderness of savage beasts, or a sty of foul swine, or a hell of cursed fiends; full of roaring and tearing, of factions and feuds, of distractions and confusions, of pitiful objects, of doleful moans, of tragical events. Men are there wallowing in filth, wildly revelling, bickering and squabbling, defaming, circumventing, disturbing and vexing one another; as if they affected nothing more than to render one another as miserable as they can. It is from lust and luxury, from ambition and avarice, from envy and spite, and the like dispositions, which religion chiefly doth interdict, that all such horrid mischiefs do spring.

In fine, the precepts of religion are no other than such as physicians would prescribe for the health of our bodies, as politicians would avow needful for the peace of the state, as Epicurean philosophers do recommend for the tranquillity of our mind, and pleasure of our lives; such as common reason dictateth, and daily trial sheweth conducible to our welfare in all respects; which consequently, were there no law exacting them of us, we should in wisdom choose to observe, and voluntarily impose on ourselves, confessing them to be fit matters of law, as most advantageous and requisite to the good (general and particular) of mankind. So that what Plutarch reporteth Solon to have said, that 'he had so squared his laws to the citizens, that all of them might clearly perceive, that to observe them was more for their benefit and interest than to violate them,' is far more true concerning the divine laws.

II. We may consider more particularly, that piety yieldeth to the practiser all kind of interior content, peace, and joy; freeth him from all kinds of dissatisfaction, regret, and disquiet; which is an inestimably great advantage: for certainly the happiness and misery of men are wholly or chiefly seated and

founded in the mind. If that is in a good state of health, rest, and cheerfulness, whatever the person's outward condition or circumstances be, he cannot be wretched: if that be distempered or disturbed, he cannot be happy. For what if a man seem very poor; if he be abundantly satisfied in his own possessions and enjoyments? What if he tasteth not the pleasures of sense; if he enjoyeth purer and sweeter delights of mind? What if tempests of fortune surround him; if his mind be calm and serene? What if he have few or no friends; if ye yet be throughly in peace and amity with himself, and can delightfully converse with his own thoughts? What if men slight, censure, or revile him; if he doth value his own state, doth approve his own actions, doth acquit himself of blame in his own conscience? Such external contingencies can surely no more prejudice a man's real happiness, than winds blustering abroad can harm or trouble him that abideth in a good room within doors, than storms and fluctuations at sea can molest him who standeth firm on the shore. On the other hand, the greatest affluence of seeming goods will avail nothing, if real content of mind be wanting. For what will the highest eminence of outward state import to him that is dejected in his own conceit? What if the world court and bless him, or if all people do admire and applaud him; if he be displeased with, if he condemneth, if he despiseth himself? What if the weather look fair and bright without, if storms rage in his breast, if black clouds do overcast his soul? What if he do abound with friends, and enjoy peace abroad; if he find distraction at home, and is at cruel variance with himself? How can a man enjoy any satisfaction, or relish any pleasure, while sore remorse doth sting him, or solicitous doubts and fears do rack him?*

Now that from the practice of religion, and from it alone, such inward content and pleasure do spring; that it only ministereth reason of content, and disposeth the mind to enjoy it; that it extirpateth the grounds and roots of discontent; that it

* Chrysostom. in Rom. i. Or. 1. Εὐθυμίαν γὰρ καὶ χαρὰν οὐκ ἀρχῆς μέγεθος, οὐ χρημάτων πλῆθος, οὐ δυναστείας ὄγκος, οὐκ ἰσχὺς σώματος, οὐ πολυτέλεια τραπέζης, οὐχ ἱματίων κόσμος, οὐκ ἄλλο τι τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ποιεῖν εἴωθεν, ἀλλ' ἡ κατόρθωμα μόνον πνευματικὸν, καὶ συνειδὸς ἀγαθόν.

is the only mother of true, sober alacrity and tranquillity of mind, will, on considering things, be manifest.

There is no other thing here in this world that can yield any solid or stable content to our mind. For all present enjoyments are transient and evanid; and of any future thing, in this kingdom of change and contingency, there can be no assurance. There is nothing below large enough to fill our vast capacities, or to satiate our boundless desires, or to appease our squeamish delicacy. There is nothing whose sweetness we do not presently exhaust and suck dry: whereof thence we do not soon grow weary, quite loathing, or faintly liking it. There is not any thing which is not slippery and fleeting; so that we can for a long time hope to possess it, or for any time can enjoy it, without restless care in keeping it, and anxious fear of losing it. Nothing there is, in the pursuance, the custody, the defence and maintenance whercof we are not liable to disappointments and crosses. Nothing consequently there is productive of any sound content to the fastidious, impatient, greedy, and restless heart of man. The greatest confluence of present, corporeal, secular things, (of all the health, the riches, the dignity, the power, the friendships and dependencies, the wit, the learning and wisdom, the reputation and renown in this world) will not afford much of it; which yet is but an imaginary supposition; for in effect hardly do all such accommodations of life concur in any state. There is ever some 'dead fly' in our box, which marreth our 'ointment;' some adherent inconvenience, which soureth the gust of our enjoyments: there is always some good thing absent which we do want or long for; some ill thing present or in prospect which we abhor, would avoid, do fear may come. If therefore we would find content, we must not seek it here; we must want it, or have it from another world: it must come hither from heaven, and thence only piety can fetch it down. This, instead of these unsatisfying, uncertain, and unstable things, supplieth us with goods adequate to our most outstretched wishes, infallibly sure, incessantly durable; 'an indefectible treasure, an incorruptible inheritance, an unshakable kingdom,'* a perfect and endless joy, capable to replenish the vastest

* Θησαυρὸν ἀνέκλειπτον, κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον, βασιλείαν ἀσάλευτον.

heart: which he that hath a good title to or a confident hope of, how can he be otherwise than extremely pleased, than fully content? It assureth the favor and friendship of God, of him that is absolute Lord and disposer of all things: the which he that hath and confideth in, what can he want or wish more? what can he fear? what can annoy or dismay him? what can hap to him worthy to be deemed evil or sad? What is poverty to him for whom God is concerned to provide? What is disgrace to him that hath the regard and approbation of God? What is danger to him whom God continually protecteth? What can any distress work on him whom God doth comfort and will relieve? What is any thing to him who is sensible that all things are purposely disposed to him by that Wisdom which perfectly knoweth what is best; by that Goodness which intirely loveth him? In fine, he that is conscious to himself of being well-affected in mind, and acting the best way, who is satisfied in the state of his soul, secure from God's displeasure, and hopeful of his favor, what can make any grievous impression on him? What other affections than such as are most grateful and pleasant can lodge in his soul? Joy and peace have natural seeds in such a mind, and necessarily must spring up there; in proportion, I mean, and according to the degrees of piety resident therein.

The Epicureans did conceit and boast, that having, by their atheistical explications of natural effects, and common events here, discarded the belief and dread of religion, they had laid a strong foundation for tranquillity of mind, had driven away all the causes of grief and fear, so that nothing then remained troublesome or terrible unto us; and consequently, what, said they, could forbid, but that we should be intirely contented, glad, and happy?—*Nos exæquat victoria cælo;* no god then surely could be more happy than we. But their attempt in many respects was vain and lame. They presumed of a victory which it is impossible to obtain: and supposing they had got it, their triumph would not have been so glorious, their success would not have been so great, as they pretended. For seeing no Epicurean discourse can baffle the potent arguments which persuade religion; (those arguments, which the visible constitution of nature, the current tradition of all ages, the

general consent of men, the pregnant attestations of history and experience concerning supernatural and miraculous events, do afford;) since the being and providence of God have proofs so clear and valid, that no subtlety of man can so far evade them as not to be shaken with them, as wholly to be freed from doubt and suspicion of their truth; since there can be no means of evincing the negative part in those questions to be true or probable; it is impossible that any considering man, in this cause against religion, should suppose himself to have acquired an absolute and secure victory, or that he should reap substantial fruit of comfort thence. It cannot be, that any man should enjoy any perfect quiet, without acting so as to get some good hope of avoiding those dreadful mischiefs, which religion threateneth to the transgressors of its precepts. Were there indeed but reason enough to stir, if not to stagger, an infidel; were it somewhat dubious whether, yea, were it great odds that there are not reserved any punishments for impiety, as indeed there is, if not the perfectest assurance imaginable, yet vast advantage on the contrary side; were there but any small reason for a judgment to come, as there are apparently very many and great ones; had most men conspired in denying providence, as ever generally they have consented in avowing it; were there a pretence of miracles for establishing the mortality and impunity of souls, as there have been numberless strongly testified by good witnesses and great events, to confirm the opposite doctrines; did most wise and sober men judge in favor of irreligion, as commonly they ever did and still do otherwise; yet wisdom would require that men should choose to be pious, since otherwise no man can be throughly secure. It is a wildness, not to dread the least possibility of incurring such horrible mischiefs: any hazard of such importance cannot but startle a man in his wits. To be in the least obnoxious to eternal torments, if men would think on it as men, (that is, as rational and provident creatures,) could not but disturb them. And indeed so it is in experience; for whatever they say, or seem, all atheists and profane men are inwardly suspicious and fearful; they care not to die, and would gladly escape the trial of what shall follow death. But let us grant or imagine the Epicurean successful as he could wish in this en-

terprise of subduing religion: yet except therewith he can also trample down reason, new mould human nature, subjugate all natural appetites and passions, alter the state of things here, and transform the world, he will yet in the greatest part fail of his conceited advantages; very short he will fall of triumphing in a contented and quiet mind. That which accrueth thence will at most be no more than some negative content, or a partial indolency, arising from his being rescued from some particular cares and fears; which exceedeth not the tranquillity of a beast, or the stupidity of one that is out of his senses: that is all he can claim, which yet is more than he can ever compass. For he cannot be as a beast, or a mere sot, if he would: reason, reflecting on present evils, and boding others future, will afflict him; his own unsatiable desires, unavoidable fears, and untameable passions, will disquiet him. Were the other world quite out of his faith, or his thought, yet this world would yield trouble sufficient to render him void of any steady rest or solid joy. All men ever have, and ever will complain that the burdens, crosses, satieties of this life, do much surpass the conveniences and comforts of it. So that, were no other to be expected or feared, this of itself would become grievous and nauseous;* we should soon have enough or too much of it, without a support and supply from otherwhere. In the largest affluence of things, in the deepest calm of our state, we are apt to nauseate, and are weary even of our prosperity itself; the which indeed commonly hath ingredients not only somewhat unsavory, but very bitter and loathsome. We may add, that had those profane attempters quite banished religion, they with it must have driven away all the benefits and comforts of it: which, even supposing them but imaginary, are yet the greatest which common life doth need, or can desire: with it they would send packing justice, fidelity, charity, sobriety, and all solid virtue, things which cannot firmly subsist without conscience: which being gone, human life would be the most disorderly, most unsafe, most wretched and contemptible thing that can be; nothing but insipid and flashy sensualities would be left behind to comfort a man with; and those hardly any

* Non tempestate vexor, sed nausea.—Senec. de Tranq. An. 1.

man (by reason of competitions and contentions for them, nowise restrainable) could enjoy quietly or safely. It is therefore piety alone, which, by raising hopes of blessings and joys incomparably superior to any here, that cannot be taken from us, can lay any ground of true content, of substantial and positive content; such as consisteth not only in removing the objects and causes of vexatious passions, but in employing the most pleasant affections (love, hope, joy,) with a delightful complacence on their proper and most noble objects. 'The kingdom of God' (and that only, no other kingdom hath that privilege) 'consisteth in righteousness' (first, then in) 'peace and spiritual joy.' No philosopher, with truth and reason, can make that overture to us which our Lord doth; 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and ye shall find rest to your souls.' Out of religion there can be no aphorism pretended like to that of the prophet, 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.'

If indeed we distinctly survey all the grounds and sources of content, it will appear that religion only can afford it.

Doth it result from a well governing and ordering our passions? Then it is plain that only a pious man is capable thereof; for piety only can effect that: it alone, with the powerful aid of divine grace, doth guide our passions by exact rules, doth set them on worthy objects, doth temper and tune them in just harmony, doth seasonably curb and check them, doth rightly correct and reform them.*

This no bare reason (which naturally is so dim and so feeble in man) can achieve: much less can unreasonableness do it, which is ever prevalent in irreligious persons. Their passions do ever run wildly and at random, in no good pace, within no good compass toward the meanest and basest objects; whence they can have no rest or quiet in their minds. As they are constantly offending, so will they ever be punishing themselves, with intestine broils and conflicts, with dissatisfactions and regrets. Hence, 'there is no peace to the wicked.' 'He

* Mala mens—cum insidiatur, spe, curis, labore distringitur; et jam cum sceleris compos fuerit, solicitudine, pœnitentia, pœnarum omnium exspectatione torquetur.—Quint. xii. 1.

is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest.' 'God (as St. Austin speaketh) hath said it, and so it is, every inordinate mind is a punishment to itself.'*

Doth content spring from a hearty approbation of, or a complacence in a man's own actions;† from reflexion that he constantly doth act according to reason and wisdom, to justice and duty? Then can the pious man alone pretend to it, who knoweth that he walketh 'inoffensively toward God and man;' that he consulteth his own best interest and welfare; that assuredly no bad consequence can attend his unblameable behavior; that most wise men have declared their approbation of his proceedings; that if he prove in his chief design mistaken, yet no mischief can thence befal him; yea, that he is not thereby quite disappointed, seeing even much present satisfaction and convenience do arise up to him from his practice.

Doth content grow from a sound and healthful constitution of soul? It is the pious man alone that hath that, whose mind is clear from distempers of vice and passion. The impious man is infirm, out of order, full of disease and pain, according to the prophet's description of him;—'The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.'

Doth content arise specially from good success in our attempts, or from prosperous events befalling us? Then it is the pious man who is most capable thereof: for he only is secure, that what seemeth good and prosperous is really such to him, as meant for his good by the divine goodness, as tending thereto by the guidance of infallible wisdom. As he only hath ground to hope for success, because he confideth in God, because he dutifully seeketh God's help, because God is favorably disposed toward him, because God 'ordereth his steps,' because God is

* Nulla major pœna nequitiæ est, quam quod sibi ac suis displicet.—Sen. Ep. 42.

Τιμωρία πάσης ἀδικίας ἀκόλουθος.—Plat. de Leg. 5.

Deus jussit, et ita est, Sibi pœna est omnis inordinatus animus.—Aug. Conf.

† Nisi sapienti sua non placent: omnis stultitia laborat fastidio sui.—Sen. Ep. 9.

by promise engaged to bless him, because he is conscious of intentions to render God thanks and praise for it, to employ his success to God's honor and service: so he only can be satisfied with the appearance of success, being able with assurance to say after St. Paul, 'we know that to those who love God all things cooperate for good.'

Is security from danger, from trouble, from want, from all evil, a source or matter of content? It certainly doth attend the pious man; God being his especial protector, his comforter, his purveyor. 'There shall no evil befal the just: there shall no plague come near his dwelling.' 'God keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken.' 'He delivereth the righteous out of their troubles.' 'The desire of the righteous shall be granted.' 'There is no want to them that fear God.' So do the holy oracles assure us.

Doth contentedness spring from sufficiency, real or apprehended? This appertaineth peculiarly to the pious man: for, having God, the master of all, for 'his portion,' he hath the richest estate that can be; he hath all that he can desire, he cannot but take himself to have enough. Hence 'godliness with contentedness (*μετ' αὐταρκείας*, with sufficiency) is,' as St. Paul saith, *μέγας πορισμὸς*, 'the great way of gaining.' He saith it not, as supposing godliness and contentedness to be separable; but rather as implying godliness therefore to be most gainful, because sufficiency and contentedness do ever attend it. In fine, if that saying of Seneca be true, that, 'if to any man the things he possesseth do not seem most ample, although he be master of the whole world, he is yet miserable;'* then assuredly the pious man only can be happy; for to him alone his possessions can seem the largest and best, such as there can be no possible accession to, or amendment of. For nothing can be greater or better than God, in whom he hath a stedfast propriety, whose infinite power and wisdom are engaged to do him the utmost good that he is capable of. And farther,

III. Seeing we have mentioned happiness, or the *summum*

* Si cui sua non videntur amplissima, licet totius mundi dominus sit, tamen miser est.—Sen. Ep. 9.

bonum, the utmost scope of human desire, we do add, that piety doth surely confer it. Happiness, whatever it be, hath certainly an essential coherence with piety. These are reciprocal propositions, both of them infallibly true, He that is pious is happy; and, He that is happy is pious. No man doth undertake or prosecute any thing which he doth not apprehend in some order or degree conducing to that which all men under a confused notion regard and tend to, which they call happiness, the highest good, the chiefest desirable thing. But in their judgments about this thing, or the means of attaining it, as men dissent much; so of necessity most of them must be mistaken. Most, indeed, do aim and shoot at a mere shadow of profit, or at that which is very little considerable, and in comparison nothing at all; which little conduceth to the perfection of their nature, or the satisfaction of their desire. If they miss the mark, they are disappointed; if they hit it, they are no less, and in effect hit nothing. But whatever this grand matter is, in whatever it consisteth, however it be procured; be it the possession and fruition of some special choice goods, or an aggregation and affluence of all goods; piety surely is the main ingredient and principal cause thereof. All other goods without it are insignificant and unuseful thereto; and it cannot be wanting where piety is. Be a man never so rich, so powerful, so learned and knowing, so prosperous in his affairs, so honorable in the opinions and affections of men: yet nowise happy can he be, if he is not pious; being he wanteth the best goods, and is subject to the worst evils; being he wanteth the love and favor of God, he wanteth peace and satisfaction of conscience, he wanteth a right enjoyment of present things, he wanteth security concerning his final welfare. Be he never so poor, so low in the eyes of men, so forlorn and destitute of worldly conveniences; yet if he be pious, he cannot be wretched; for he hath an interest in goods incomparably most precious, and is safe from all considerable evils; he hath a free resort to the inexhaustible fountain of all happiness, he hath a right to immense and endless felicity, the which eminently containeth all the goods we are capable of; he is possessed thereof in hope and certain reversion, there is but a moment to pass before his complete fruition of it. The want of all other petty

things no more can maim the integrity of his felicity, than cutting the hair, or paring the nails, do mutilate a man: all other things are but superfluities or excrescences in regard to the constitution of happiness. Whatever happeneth, that will assuredly be true, which is so much inculcated in holy Scripture, 'Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his ways; happy shall he be, and it shall be well with him.' Piety is indeed fraught with beatitudes, every part thereof yieldeth peculiar blessedness. To the love of God, to charity toward our neighbor, to purity of heart, to meekness, to humility, to patience, to mercifulness, to peaceableness, beatitude is ascribed by our Lord, the great Judge and Dispenser of it. Each religious performance hath happy fruits growing from it, and blissful rewards assigned thereto. All pious dispositions are fountains of pleasant streams, which by their confluence do make up a full sea of felicity.

IV. It is a peculiar advantage of piety, that it furnisheth employment fit for us, worthy of us, hugely grateful and highly beneficial to us. Man is a very busy and active creature, which cannot live and do nothing, whose thoughts are in restless motion, whose desires are ever stretching at somewhat, who perpetually will be working either good or evil to himself; wherefore greatly profitable must that thing be which determineth him to act well, to spend his care and pain on that which is truly advantageous to him; and that is religion only. It alone fasteneth our thoughts, affections, and endeavors, on occupations worthy the dignity of our nature, suiting the excellency of our natural capacities and endowments, tending to the perfection and advancement of our reason, to the enriching and ennobling of our souls. Secluding that, we have nothing in the world to study, to affect, to pursue, not very mean and below us, not very base and misbecoming us, as men of reason and judgment. What have we to do but to eat and drink, like horses or like swine; but to sport and play, like children or apes; but to bicker and scuffle about trifles and impertinences, like ideots? what, but to scrape or scramble for useless pelf; to hunt after empty shows and shadows of honor, or the vain fancies and dreams of men? what, but to wallow or bask in sordid pleasures, the which soon degenerate into remorse and

bitterness? To which sort of employments were a man confined, what a pitiful thing would he be, and how inconsiderable were his life! Were a man designed only, like a fly, to buzz about here for a time, sucking in the air, and licking the dew, then soon to vanish back into nothing, or to be transformed into worms, how sorry and despicable a thing were he? And such without religion we should be. But it supplieth us with business of a most worthy nature and lofty importance; it setteth us on doing things great and noble as can be; it engageth us to free our minds from all fond conceits, and cleanse our hearts from all corrupt affections; to curb our brutish appetites, to tame our wild passions, to correct our perverse inclinations, to conform the dispositions of our soul and the actions of our life to the eternal laws of righteousness and goodness: it putteth us on the imitation of God, and aiming at the resemblance of his perfections; on obtaining a friendship and maintaining a correspondence with the High and Holy One; on fitting our minds for conversation and society with the wisest and purest spirits above; on providing for an immortal state, on the acquist of joy and glory everlasting. It employeth us in the divinest actions, of promoting virtue, of performing beneficence, of serving the public, and doing good to all: the being exercised in which things doth indeed render a man highly considerable, and his life excellently valuable.

It is an employment most proper to us as reasonable men. For what more proper entertainments can our mind have than to be purifying and beautifying itself, to be keeping itself and its subordinate faculties in order, to be attending on the management of thoughts, of passions, of words, of actions depending on its governance?

It is an employment most beneficial to us; in pursuing which we greatly better ourselves and improve our condition; we benefit and oblige others; we procure sound reputation and steady friendships; we decline many irksome mischiefs and annoyances; we do not, like those in the prophet, 'spend our labor for that which satisfieth not, nor spend our money for that which is not bread:' for both temporal prosperity and eternal felicity are the wages of the labor which we take herein.

It is an employment most constant, never allowing sloth or

listlessness to creep in, incessantly busying all our faculties with earnest contention; according to that profession of St. Paul, declaring the nature thereof, 'Herein always do I exercise myself, to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.' Whence it is called a 'fight,' and a 'race,' implying the continual earnestness of attention and activity which is to be spent thereon.

It is withal a sweet and grateful business; for it is a pious man's character, that 'he delighteth greatly in God's commandments;' that 'the commandments are not grievous to him;' that it is 'his meat and drink to do God's will;' that 'God's words (or precepts) are sweeter than honey to his taste;' that 'the ways of' religious 'wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' Whereas all other employments are wearisome, and soon become loathsome; this, the farther we proceed in it, the more pleasant and satisfactory it groweth.* There is perpetual matter of victory over bad inclinations pestering us within, and strong temptations assailing us without: which to combat hath much delight; to master, breedeth unexpressible content. The sense also of God's love, the influences of his grace and comfort communicated in the performances of devotion and all duty, the satisfaction of good conscience, the assured hope of reward, the foretastes of future bliss, do season and sweeten all the labors taken, and all the difficulties undergone therein.

In fine, the bare light of nature hath discerned, that were it not for such matters as these to spend a man's care and pains on, this would be a lamentable world to live in. There was, for instance, an emperor great and mighty as ever did wield sceptre on earth, whose excellent virtue, coupled with wisdom, (inferior, perhaps, to none that any man ever without special inspiration hath been endowed with,) did qualify him with most advantage to examine and rightly to judge of things here; who, notwithstanding all the conveniences which his royal estate and well settled prosperity might afford, (the which

* Non potest cuiquam semper idem placere, nisi rectum.—Sen. 20.

Dedit hoc providentia hominibus munus, ut honesta magis juvarent.—Quint. i. 12.

surely he had fully tasted and tried,) did yet thus express his thoughts: Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κενῷ; 'What doth it concern me to live in a world void of God, or void of providence?'* To govern the greatest empire that ever was, in the deepest calm; to enjoy the largest affluences of wealth, of splendor, of respect, of pleasure; to be loved, to be dreaded, to be served, to be adored by so many nations; to have the whole civil world obsequious to his will and nod; all these things seemed vain and idle, not worthy of a man's regard, affection, or choice, in case there were no god to worship, no providence to observe, no piety to be exercised. So little worth the while common sense hath adjudged it to live without religion.

V. It is a considerable benefit of piety, that it affordeth the best friendships and sweetest society. Man is framed for society, and cannot live well without it;† many of his faculties would be useless, many of his appetites would rest unsatisfied in solitude. To have a friend wise and able, honest and good, unto whom on all occasions we may have recourse for advice, for assistance, for consolation, is a great convenience of life: and this benefit we owe to religion, which supplieth us with various friendships of the best kind, most beneficial and most sweet unto us.‡

It maketh God our friend, a friend infinitely better than all friends, most affectionate and kind, most faithful and sure, most able, most willing, and ever most ready to perform all friendly offices, to yield advice in all our doubts, succor in all our needs, comfort in all our troubles, satisfaction to all our desires. Unto him it ministereth a free address on all occasions; with him it alloweth us continually a most sweet and pleasant intercourse. The pious man hath always the all-wise God to counsel him, to guide his actions and order his steps: he hath the Almighty to protect, support, and relieve him; he hath the immense Goodness to commiserate and comfort him; unto

* M. Ant. ii. 11. vi. 10.

† Nullius boni sine socio jucunda possessio est.—Sen. Ep. 6.

‡ Ut aliarum rerum nobis innata dulcedo est, sic amicitiæ.—Sen. Ep. 9.

him he is not only encouraged, but obliged to resort in need: on him he may, he ought to discharge all his cares and burdens.

It consequently doth engage all creatures in the world to be our friends, or instruments of good to us, according to their several capacities, by the direction and disposal of God. All the servants of our great Friend will, in compliance to him, be serviceable to us, 'Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee:' so Job's friend promiseth him on condition of piety. And God himself confirmeth that promise; 'In that day,' saith he in the Prophet, 'will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground.' And again, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle on thee.' And, 'The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.' 'Thou shalt tread on the lion and adder, the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot.' 'They shall take up scorpions; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them:' (so our Lord promised to his disciples.) Not only the heavens shall dispense their kindly influences, and the earth yield her plentiful stores, and all the elements discharge their natural and ordinary good offices; not only the tame and sociable creatures shall on this condition faithfully serve us; but even the most wild, most fierce, most ravenous, most venomous creatures shall, if there be need, prove friendly and helpful, or at least harmless to us: as were the ravens to Elias, the lions to Daniel, the viper to St. Paul, the fire to the three children.

But especially piety doth procure the friendship of the good angels, that puissant host of glorious and happy spirits: they all do tenderly love the pious person; they are ever ready to serve and do him good, to protect him from danger, to aid him in his undertakings, to rescue him from mischiefs. What an honor, what a blessing is this, to have such an innumerable company of noble friends (the courtiers and favorites of heaven) deeply concerned and constantly vigilant for our welfare!

It also engageth the blessed saints in glory, 'the spirits of just men perfected,' 'the church of the first-born,' to bear dearest affection to us, to further our prosperity with their good wishes and earnest prayers, mightily prevalent with God.

It rendereth all sorts of men our friends. To good men it uniteth us in holy communion; the communion of brotherly charity and hearty good will, attended with all the good offices they are able to perform: to other men it reconcileth and endeareth us; for that innocent and inoffensive, courteous and benign, charitable and beneficent demeanor, (such as piety doth require and produce,) are apt to conciliate respect and affection from the worst men. For, *vincit malos pertinax bonitas*;* men hardly can persist enemies to him whom they perceive to be their friend: and such the pious man in disposition of mind, and in effect when occasion serveth, is toward all men;† being sensible of his obligation to love all men, and, 'as he hath opportunity, to do good to all men.' It assureth and more strictly endeareth our friends to us. For as it maketh us hearty, faithful, constant friends to others; so it reciprocally tieth others to us in the like sincerity and fastness of good-will.‡

It reconcileth enemies. For 'when a man's ways do please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.' It hath a natural efficacy to that purpose, and divine blessing promoteth it.

By it all conversation becometh tolerable, grateful, and useful. For a pious man is not easily disturbed with any crossness or perverseness, any infirmity or impertinency of those he converseth with: he can bear the weaknesses and the failings of his company; he can by wholesome reflexions on all occurrences advantage and please himself.§

In fine, piety rendereth a man a true friend and a good com-

* Sen. de Benef. vii. 21.

† Qui sibi amicus est, scito hunc amicum omnibus esse.—Sen. Ep. 6.

‡ Οἱ ἀγαθοὶ ἡδεῖς ἀλλήλοις.—Arist. Eth. viii. 4.

§ Συνδιάγειν τε οὗτος ἑαυτῷ βούλεται· ἡδέως γὰρ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ.—(Aristot. Eth ix. 4.) τῶν τε γὰρ πεπραγμένων ἐπιτερπεῖς αἱ μνῆμαι, καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἐλπίδες ἀγαθαί.

panion to himself; satisfied in himself, able to converse freely and pleasantly with his own thoughts.* It is for the want of pious inclinations and dispositions, that solitude (a thing which sometimes cannot be avoided, which often should be embraced) is to most men so irksome and tedious, that men do carefully shun themselves, and fly from their own thoughts; that they decline all converse with their own souls, and hardly dare look on their own hearts and consciences: whence they become aliens from home, wholly unacquainted with themselves, most ignorant of their own nearest concernments, no faithful friends or pleasant companions to themselves; so for refuge and ease they unseasonably run into idle or lewd conversation, where they disorder and defile themselves.† But the pious man is, like Scipio, 'never less alone than when alone:'‡ his solitude and retirement is not only tolerable, but commonly the most grateful and fruitful part of his life; he can ever with much pleasure and more advantage converse with himself; digesting and marshalling his thoughts, his affections, his purposes into good order; searching and discussing his heart, reflecting on his past ways, enforcing his former good resolutions, and framing new ones; inquiring after edifying truths; stretching his meditations toward the best and sublimest objects, raising his hopes and warming his affections towards spiritual and heavenly things; asking himself pertinent questions, and resolving incident doubts concerning his practice: in fine, conversing with his best friend in devotion; with admiration and love contemplating the divine perfections displayed in the works of nature, of providence, of grace; praising God for his excellent benefits and mercies; confessing his defects and offences; deprecating wrath and imploring pardon, with grace and ability to amend; praying

* Quæris quid profecerim? amicus esse mihi cœpi.—Sen. Ep. 6.

† Nemo est, cui non satius sit cum quolibet esse, quam secum.—Sen. Ep. 25.

Ἔνιοι τὸν ἴδιον βίον, ὡς ἀτερπέστατον θέαμα, προσιδεῖν οὐχ ὑπομένουσιν, &c.—Plut. περὶ Πολυπρ. p. 916.

Ζητοῦσιν οἱ μοχθηροὶ μεθ' ὧν συνημερεύσουσιν, ἑαυτοὺς δὲ φεύγουσιν.—Arist. ix. 4.

‡ Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.

for the supply of all his wants.* All which performances yield both unconceivable benefit and unexpressible comfort. So that solitude (that which is to common nature so offensive, to corrupt nature so abominable) is to the pious man extremely commodious and comfortable; which is a great advantage peculiar to piety, and the last which I shall mention.

So many, and many more than I can express, vastly great and precious advantages do accrue from piety; so that well may we conclude with St. Paul, that 'godliness is profitable for all things.'

It remaineth that, if we be wise, we should, if we yet have it not ingrafted in us, labor to acquire it; if we have it, that we should endeavor to improve it, by constant exercise, to the praise of God, the good of our neighbor, and our own comfort. Which that we may effectually perform, Almighty God in mercy vouchsafe, by his grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

* Acquiescit sibi, cogitationibus suis traditus.—Sen. Ep. 9.

Sapiens nunquam solus esse potest, habet secum omnes qui sunt, quique unquam fuerunt boni; et animum liberum quocunque vult transfert: quod corpore non potest, cogitatione complectitur; et si hominum inops fuerit, loquitur cum Deo. Nunquam minus solus erit, quam cum solus fuerit.—Hier. adv. Jovin. i. 28.

SUMMARY OF SERMON IV.

1 SAMUEL, CHAP. II.—VERSE 30.

THE words of the text were uttered immediately by God himself, and therefore may well command our attention. They plainly imply two things; a duty required of us, *to honor God;* and a reward proferred to us on the performance of that duty, *being honored by God.* The method of this discourse is, first, to estimate the reward, then to explain the duty; afterwards to show briefly why in reason the duty is injoined; how in effect the reward is conferred.

I. The reward may be considered either absolutely, as to what it is in itself; or relatively, as to its rise, and whence it comes.

1. For itself, it is honor; a thing, if valued according to the rate it commonly bears, of highest price among all the objects of human desire, the chief reward unto which the greatest and best actions pretend: this point enlarged on: reasons given why honor is in such request and of such force. The appetite for it shown to be rooted in our very nature: examples of this ambition in eminent men. A moderate regard for honor shown even to be commendable, as an instance of good-will towards others, and an argument of humility as it concerns ourselves. The authority also of the more cool and candid sort of philosophers alleged for its commendation, inasmuch as they have ranked honor among the principal of things desirable, and adorned it with fairest eulogies. But beyond all this, the holy Scripture, that most certain standard by which we may examine and determine the true worth of things, does not teach us to

slight honor, but rather in its fit order and just measure to love and prize it: this is not only shown to be the case in temporal affairs, but the blessed state hereafter is represented and recommended to us as a state of honor and glory; to be ambitious of which is the character of a good man: Rom. ii. 6. 7. Such is the precious reward proposed to us in itself: to obtain this reward our text prescribes to us the certain and the only way.

2. Such a benefit is here tendered to us (which yet more highly enhances its worth) by God himself: *I*, saith he, *will honor:* he who is the prime author of all good, is in especial manner the sovereign dispenser of honor. *The king*, we say, is *the fountain of honor.* What any king, as the representative and delegate of God, is in his particular kingdom, that is the Almighty absolutely and independently in all the world: the excellence and surety of his grants enlarged on. Consideration of what it is which is here required of us, or wherein this honoring of God consists, that we may thereby discern when we perform this duty, and when we are deficient therein.

II. There are several ways of honoring God, or several parts and degrees of this duty; all of which may be referred to two sorts, according to a distinction suggested by St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 20.: one of them being, as it were, the form and soul, the other the matter and body of the duty.

1. The soul of that honor which is required of us towards God, is the internal esteem and reverence which we should bear in our hearts for him; signifying that we have impressed on our minds such conceptions about him as are suitable to the perfection of his nature, to the eminency of his state, to the just quality of his works and actions; that we apprehend him to be, what he really is, in his nature superlatively good, wise, powerful, and just: this point enlarged on.

2. The bodily part consists in outward expressions and performances, whereby we declare our esteem and reverence of God, and produce or promote the like in others. This viewed first in

its general or gross bulk; next surveyed in its principal members.

First, in general, God is honored by a willing and careful practice of all piety and virtue for conscience sake, or in avowed obedience to his will. This is the most natural expression of our reverence towards him, and the most effectual way of promoting the same in others: instanced in the conduct of a good subject towards his prince; and in this we are encouraged by the precepts of holy Scripture.

Secondly; there are some members of this duty deserving a particular consideration; some acts which more signally conduce to the illustration of God's glory. Such are, 1. the frequent and constant performance of all religious duties, in a serious, reverent manner: 2. the using all things peculiarly related to him, his holy name and word, his holy places and times, with especial respect: 3. the yielding due observance to his deputies and ministers: 4. the freely spending what he has given us in works of piety and charity: 5. all penitential acts by which we submit unto God, and humble ourselves before him: 6. the cheerfully undergoing afflictions or losses in profession of his truth, or obedience to his commands: 7. especially the discharging faithfully those offices with which God has intrusted us, improving diligently the talents he has committed to us, and using carefully those means and opportunities which he gives us of doing good: this topic enlarged on, and recommended most strongly to those who are in power and authority, whose example has the strongest effect and most extensive influence on others.

III. It is shown why the duty is required of us, or how reasonable it is. This point so clear, that many words need not be spent on it. God surely does not exact honor from us because he needs it, because he is the better for it, or because he delights in it for itself: this we cannot suppose if we consider his nature and attributes. It is then only his pure goodness that

moves him, for our benefit, to demand it of us. For to honor God is, 1. shown to be the most proper work of reason : 2. a most pleasant duty: 3. that it disposes us to imitate him : 4. that it is most beneficial to us, because by an eternal rule of justice our final welfare is annexed to it, God having promised to confer honor on those who honor him. And,

IV. This promise he makes good several ways; some of which are briefly suggested. 1. The honoring God is of itself an honorable thing, the employment which ennobles heaven itself. 2. By it we are immediately instated in great honor; we enter into noble relations, acquire illustrious titles, enjoy glorious privileges, are adopted into God's family, and are styled his children. 3. By God's peculiar ordinance honor is naturally consequent on our honoring him; for he has made goodness a noble thing, an object of esteem and reverence to all men. 4. By his extraordinary providence, as there is reason and occasion, he interposes to maintain and further the reputation of those who honor him. 5. Whereas men are naturally inclined to regard the judgment of posterity, and are anxious to leave a good name behind them, God so disposes things that *the memory of the just shall be blessed.* Lastly, to those who honor him here, he has reserved an honor hereafter, to which all the glories of this world are but as duskish fleeting shadows—an honor most solid, most durable ; *an eternal weight of glory.*

SERMON IV.

THE REWARD OF HONORING GOD.

I SAMUEL, CHAP. II.—VERSE 30.

For them that honor me I will honor.

THE words are in the strictest sense the word of God, uttered immediately by God himself; and may thence command from us an especial attention and regard. The history of that which occasioned them is, I presume, well known; neither shall I make any descant or reflexion thereon; but to take the words separately, as a proposition of itself, affording a complete instruction and ample matter of discourse. And as such, they plainly imply two things: a duty required of us to honor God; and a reward proffered to us on performance of that duty, being honored by God. It is natural for us, before we are willing to undertake any work, to consider the reward or benefit accruing from it; and it is necessary, before we can perform any duty, to understand the nature thereof. To this our method of action I shall suit the method of my discourse; first endeavoring to estimate the reward, then to explain the duty. Afterward I mean to show briefly why in reason the duty is enjoined; how in effect the reward is conferred.

I. The reward may be considered either absolutely, as what it is in itself; or relatively, as to its rise, and whence it comes.

1. For itself, it is honor; a thing, if valued according to the rate it bears in the common market, of highest price among all the objects of human desire; the chief reward which the

greatest actions and which the best actions do pretend unto or are capable of; that which usually bears most sway in the hearts, and hath strongest influence on the lives of men; the desire of obtaining and maintaining which doth commonly overbear other most potent inclinations. The love of pleasure stoops thereto: for men, to get or keep reputation, will decline the most pleasant enjoyments, will embrace the hardest pains. Yea, it often prevails over the love of life itself, which men do not only frequently expose to danger, but sometimes devote to certain loss, for its sake. If we observe what is done in the world, we may discern it to be the source of most undertakings therein: that it not only moveth the wheels of public action, (that not only for it great princes contend, great armies march, great battles are fought;) but that from it most private business derives its life and vigor: that for honor especially the soldier undergoes hardship, toil, and hazard; the scholar plods and beats his brains; the merchant runs about so busily, and adventures so far; yea, that for its sake the meanest laborer and artificer doth spend his sweat and stretch his sinews. The principal drift of all this care and industry (the great reason of all this scuffling for power, this searching for knowlege, this scraping and scrambling for wealth) doth seem to be, that men would live in some credit, would raise themselves above contempt.*

In such request, of such force, doth honor appear to be. If we examine why, we may find more than mere fashion (or mu-

* Ἴδοις δ' ἂν καὶ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν τοὺς ἐπιεικεστάτους, ὑπὲρ ἄλλου μὲν οὐδενὸς ἂν τὸ ζῆν ἀντικαταλλαξαμένους· ὑπὲρ δὲ τοῦ τυχεῖν καλῆς δόξης, ἀποθνήσκειν ἐθέλοντας.—Isocr. Orat. ad Philip.

Mors tum æquissimo animo appetitur, cum suis se laudibus vita occidens consolari potest.—Cic. i. Tusc.

— Laudis avidi pecuniæ liberales erant, gloriam ingentem divitias honestas volebant; hanc ardentissime dilexerunt, propter hanc vivere voluerunt, pro hac et mori non dubitaverunt. Cæteras cupiditates hujus unius ingenti cupiditate presserunt.—Aug. de Civ. Dei, v. 12.

Αἱ γὰρ δυναστεῖαι καὶ ὁ πλοῦτος διὰ τὴν τιμήν ἐστιν αἱρετά.—Arist. Eth. iv. 3.

Honos alit artes, omnesque incenduntur ad studia gloria, &c.—Cic. Tusc. Quæst. 1.

tual imitation and consent) to ground the experiment on. There is one obvious reason why no mean regard should be had thereto; its great convenience and usefulness: for that a man cannot himself live safely, quietly, or pleasantly, without some competent measure thereof; cannot well serve the public, perform offices of duty to his relations, of kindness to his friends, of charity to his neighbors, but under its protection, and with its aid: it being an engine very requisite for the managing any business, for the compassing any design, at least sweetly and smoothly; it procuring to us many furtherances in our proceedings, removing divers obstacles out of our way, guarding a man's person from offences, adding weight to his words, putting an edge on his endeavors: for every one allows a favorable ear to his discourse, lends an assisting hand to his attempts, grants a ready credence to his testimony, and makes a fair construction of his doings, whom he esteems and respects. So is honor plainly valuable among the *bona utilia*, as no small accommodation of life; and as such, reason approves it to our judgment.*

But searching farther, we shall find the appetite of honor to have a deeper ground, and that it is rooted even in our nature itself. For we may descry it budding forth in men's first infancy, (before the use of reason, or speech;) even little children being ambitious to be made much of, maintaining among themselves petty emulations and competitions,† as it were about punctilios of honor. We may observe it growing with age, waxing bigger and stronger together with the increase of wit and knowlege, of civil culture and experience; that the maturest age doth most resent and relish it; that it prevails most in civilised nations; that men of the best parts, of the highest improvements, of the weightiest employments, do most

* Vide Hier. Ep. ad Celant.

Conscientia nobis necessaria est, fama proxima. Qui conscientia fidens, famam negligit, crudelis est.—Aug.

Πρὸς χρείας ἐπιτήδειον ὄργανον ἡ δόξα.—Galen.

Nec vero negligenda fama est; nec mediocre telum ad res gerendas existimare oportet benevolentiam civium.—Cic. de Amic.

Vide Chrys. tom. vi. Orat. 17.

† Vidi ego et expertus sum zelantem parvulum, &c.—Aug.

zealously affect it and stand on it; that they who most struggle with it do most feel its might, how difficult it is to resist and restrain it, how impossible it is to stifle or extinguish it. For the philosopher with all his reasons and considerations cannot dispute it down, or persuade it away; the anchoret cannot with all his austerities starve it, or by his retirement shun it: no affliction, no poverty, no wretchedness of condition can totally suppress it. It is a spirit that not only haunts our courts and palaces, but frequents our schools and cloisters, yea, creeps into cottages, into hospitals, into prisons, and even dogs men into desarts and solitudes;* so close it sticks to our nature. Plato saith, it is the last coat which a wise man doth put off. But I question whether he could show us that wise man who had done it, or could tell us where he dwelt, except perhaps in his own Utopian republic. For they who most pretend to have done it (who in their discourse most vilify honor; who talk like Chrysippus, that a wise man for reputation sake will not so much as stretch out his finger; or like Seneca, that we should do every thing purely for conscience sake, without any regard to men's opinion; who make harangues and write volumes against glory†) do yet appear by their practice, sometimes, by so doing, to aim at it: even as men do usually complain of and eagerly quarrel with that which they most affect and woo. Chrysippus wrote, as we are told, above 700 books, most of them concerning logical quirks, and such as one can hardly imagine what other drift he could have in composing them, besides ostentation of his subtilty and sharpness of wit. Seneca, if history do not wrong him, and the face of his actions do not misrepresent him, was not in his heart exempt from a spice of ambition. Yea, that excellent emperor M. Aurelius, who would often speak like a Stoic, could not but commonly act like a man, more by his practice commending honor, than

* In solitudine sitis subrepit superbia.—Hier.

† Nihil opinionis causa, omnia conscientiæ faciam.—Sen. de V. B.

Nil sit illi cum ambitione famaque commune, sibi placeat.—Epist. 113.

Justum esse gratis oportet.—Ib.

Id. de Ira, iii. 41.

he disparaged it in his words. For story represents him very careful and jealous of his credit, very diligent to preserve it and to repair it.* Tertullian calls such philosophers *negotiatores famæ*,† merchants for fame: and it is perchance some part of their cunning in that trade, which makes them strive to beat down the price of this commodity, that they may more easily ingross it to themselves. However, experience proves that such words are but words, (words spoken out of affectation and pretence, rather than in good earnest and according to truth;) that endeavors to banish or to extirpate this desire are but fond and fruitless attempts. The reason why is clear: for it is as if one should dispute against eating and drinking, or should labor to free himself from hunger and thirst: the appetite of honor being indeed, as that of food, innate unto us, so as not to be quenched or smothered, except by some violent distemper or indisposition of mind;‡ even by the wise Author of our nature originally implanted therein, for very good ends and uses, respecting both the private and public benefit of men; as an engagement to virtue, and a restraint from vice; as an excitement of industry, an incentive of courage, a support of constancy in the prosecution of worthy enterprises; as a serviceable instrument for the constitution, conservation, and improvement of human society. For did not some love of honor glow in men's breasts, were that noble spark quite extinct, few men probably would study for honorable qualities, or perform laudable deeds; there would be nothing to keep some men within bounds of modesty and decency, to deter them from doing odious and ugly things; men, not caring what others thought of them, would not regard what they did themselves; a barbarous sloth or brutish stupidity would overspread the world, withdrawing from common life most of its ornaments, much of its convenience; men generally would, if not altoge-

* Erat famæ suæ curiosissimus, et male loquentium dictis vel literis ve sermone respondebat.—Capit.

† Tert. Apol.

‡ Ut quidam morbo aliquo et sensus stupore suavitatem cibi non sentiunt; sic libidinosi, avari, facinorosi veræ laudis gustum non habent.—Cic. Philipp. 2.

ther shun society, yet at least decline the cares and burdens requisite to the promoting its welfare, for the sustaining which usually the chief encouragement, the main recompense, is this of honor. That men therefore have so tender and delicate a sense of their reputation, (so that touching it is like pricking a nerve, as soon felt, and as smartly offensive,) is an excellent provision in nature; in regard whereto honor may pass among the *bona naturalia,* as a good necessary for the satisfaction of nature, and for securing the accomplishment of its best designs.

A moderate regard to honor is also commendable as an instance of humanity or good will to men, yea, as an argument of humility, or a sober conceit of ourselves.* For to desire another man's esteem, and consequently his love, (which in some kind or degree is an inseparable companion of esteem,) doth imply somewhat of reciprocal esteem and affection toward him; and to prize the judgment of other men concerning us, doth signify that we are not oversatisfied with our own.

We might for its farther commendation allege the authority of the more cool and candid sort of philosophers, (such as grounded their judgment of things on notions agreeable to common sense and experience; who adapted their rules of practice to the nature of man, such as they found it in the world, not such as they framed it in their own fancies,) who have ranked honor among the principal of things desirable, and adorned it with fairest eulogies; terming it a divine thing, the best of exterior goods, the most honest fruit and most ample reward of true virtue; adjudging that to neglect the opinions of men (especially of persons worthy and laudable) is a sign of stupid baseness, that to contemn them is an effect of unreasonable haughtiness; representing the love of honor (rightly grounded and duly moderated) not only as the parent and guardian (as productive and preservative) of other virtues, but as a virtue itself of no small magnitude and lustre in the constellation of virtues,

* Negligere quid de se quisque sentiat arrogantis est et dissoluti.—Cic. de Offic. i.

the virtue of generosity.* A virtue which, next to the spirit of true religion, (next to a hearty reverence toward the supreme blessed Goodness, and that holy charity toward men which springeth thence,) doth lift a man up nearest to heaven; doth raise his mind above the sordid desires, the sorry cares, the fond humors, the perverse and froward passions, with which men commonly are possessed and acted: that virtue which inflames a man with courage, so that he dares perform what reason and duty require of him, that he disdains to do what is bad or base; which inspires him with sincerity, that he values his honesty before all other interests and respects, that he abhors to wrong or deceive, to flatter or abuse any man, that he cannot endure to seem otherwise than he is, to speak otherwise than he means, to act otherwise than he promises and professes; which endows him with courtesy, that he is ready to yield every man his due respect, to afford any man what help and succor he is able: that virtue which renders a man upright in all his dealings, and correspondent to all his obligations; a loyal subject to his prince, and a true lover of his country, a candid judge of persons and things, an earnest favorer of whatever is good and commendable, a faithful and hearty friend, a beneficial and useful neighbor, a grateful resenter and requiter of courtesies, hospitable to the stranger, bountiful to the poor, kind and good to all the world: that virtue, in fine, which constitutes a man of honor, who surely is the best man next to a man of conscience. Thus may honor be valued from natural light, and according to common sense.†

* Θεῖόν τι ἡ τιμή.—Plat. de Leg. iv.

Καλὸν ταῖς πολλαῖς πόλεσι τὸ παρακέλευσμά ἐστι, προτιμᾷν εὐδοξίαν πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν.—Idem de Rep. xii.

Μέγιστον τῶν ἐκτὸς ἀγαθῶν ἡ τιμή.—Arist. Eth. iv. 3.

Levis est animi, justam gloriam, qui est fructus virtutis honestissimus, repudiare.—Cic. in Pis.

Ex omnibus præmiis virtutis amplissimum est præmium gloria.—Idem pro Mil.

† Trahimur omnes laudis studio, et optimus quisque maxime gloria ducitur.—Cic. pro Arch.

Οἱ χαρίεντες καὶ πρακτικοὶ, plausible and active men do, saith Aristotle, place happiness in honor.—Eth. i. 4.

But beyond all this, the holy Scripture (that most certain standard, by which we may examine and determine the true worth of things) doth not teach us to slight honor, but rather in its fit order and just measure to love and prize it. It indeed instructs us to ground it well, not on bad qualities or wicked deeds, that is villainous madness; not on things of a mean and indifferent nature, that is vanity; not on counterfeit shows and pretences, that is hypocrisy; but on real worth and goodness, that may consist with modesty and sobriety: it enjoins us not to be immoderate in our desires thereof, or complacences therein, not to be irregular in the pursuit or acquist of it; (to be so is pride and ambition;) but to affect it calmly, to purchase it fairly: it directs us not to make a regard thereto our chief principle, not to propound it as our main end of action: it charges us to bear contentedly the want or loss thereof, (as of other temporal goods;) yea, in some cases, for conscience sake, or for God's service, (that is, for a good incomparably better than it,) it obliges us willingly to prostitute and sacrifice it, choosing rather to be infamous than impious, (to be in disgrace with men rather than in disfavor with God:*) it, in fine, commands us to seek and embrace it only in subordination and with final reference to God's honor. Which distinctions and cautions being provided, honor is represented in holy Scripture as a thing considerably good, which may be regarded without blame, which sometimes in duty must be regarded. It is there preferred before other good things, in themselves not despicable. For, 'a good name is better than precious ointment;' yea, 'a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches,' saith the wise man. It is called a gift of God: for, 'there is a man,' saith the preacher, 'to whom God hath given riches and honor.' Yea, not only a simple gift, but a blessing, conferred in kindness, as a reward and encouragement of goodness: for, 'by humility and the fear of the Lord,' saith he again, 'are riches and honor.' Whence it is to be acknowleged as an especial benefit, and a fit ground of thanksgiving; as is

* Non vis esse justus sine gloria? at mehercule sæpe justus esse debes cum infamia.—Sen. Epist. cxiii.

practised by the Psalmist in his royal hymn: 'honor,' saith he, 'and majesty hast thou laid on him.' Wisdom also is described unto us bearing 'in her left hand riches and honor:' and Wisdom surely will not take into any hand of hers, or hold therein, what is worth nothing. No: we are therefore moved to procure her, because, 'exalting her, she shall promote us.—She shall give unto our head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to us.' We are also enjoined to render honor as the best expression of good-will and gratitude toward them who best deserve in themselves, or most deserve of us; to our prince, to our parents, to our priests, especially to such of them 'as govern and teach well,' to all good men, ('have such in reputation,' says the Apostle.) And were not honor a good thing, such injunctions would be unreasonable. Yea, because we are obliged to bear good will toward all men, St. Peter bids us to 'honor all men.' From hence also, that we are especially bound to render honor unto God himself, we may well infer with Aristotle, that 'honor is the best thing in our power to offer.' To these considerations may be added, that we are commanded to walk εὐσχημόνως, (*decently*, or speciously, which implies a regard to men's opinion;) to 'provide things honest in the sight of all men,' (τὰ καλὰ, that is, not only things good in substance, but goodly in appearance;) to 'have our conversation honest before the Gentiles:' (καλὴν again, that is, fair, or comely, and plausible, such as may commend us and our profession to the judgment of them who observe us.) St. Paul also exhorts us to mind, not only 'what things are true, are just, are pure;' but also ὅσα σεμνὰ, ('whatever things are venerable,' or apt to beget respect,) ὅσα προσφιλῆ, ('whatever things are lovely,' or gracious in men's eyes and esteem,) ὅσα εὔφημα, ('whatever things are well reported, or well reputed of.') He requires us not only, 'if there be any virtue,' (any thing very good in itself,) but 'if there be any praise', (any thing much approved in common esteem,) that we should 'mind such things.' Lastly, the blessed state hereafter (the highest instance of divine bounty, the complete reward of goodness) is represented and recommended to us as a state of honor and glory; to be ambitious whereof is the character of a good

man. 'To every man,' saith St. Paul, 'shall God render according to his works: to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life.'

Such is the reward propounded to us in itself; no vile or contemptible thing, but on various accounts much valuable; that which the common apprehensions of men, plain dictates of reason, a predominant instinct of nature, the judgments of very wise men, and divine attestation itself conspire to commend unto us as very considerable and precious. Such a reward our text prescribes us the certain, the only way of attaining.

2. Such a benefit is here tendered to us (that which yet more highly commends it, and exceedingly enhances its worth) by God himself: 'I,' saith he, 'will honor.' It is sanctified by coming from his holy hand; it is dignified by following his most wise and just disposal; it is fortified and assured by depending on his unquestionable word and uncontrollable power: who, as he is the prime Author of all good, so he is in especial manner the sovereign dispenser of honor. The king, we say, is the fountain of honor. What any king, as the representative and delegate of God, is in his particular kingdom, that is Almighty God absolutely and independently in all the world. 'Both riches and honor,' said good king David, 'come of thee, for thou rulest over all: in thine hand is power and might; in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.' He whose grants are in effect only sure and valid, whose favors only do in the end turn to good account, he freely offers us most desirable preferment: he doth himself graciously hold forth most authentic patents, by virtue of which we may all become 'right honorable' and 'persons of quality indeed;' having not only the names and titles, the outward ensigns and badges of dignity, (such as earthly princes confer,) but the substantial reality, the assured enjoyment thereof. (For man can only impose law on tongues and gestures; God alone commandeth and inclineth hearts, wherein honor chiefly resideth.) He offers it, I say, most freely indeed, yet not absolutely: he doth not go to sell it for a price, yet he propounds it under a condition; as a most just and

equal, so a very gentle and easy condition. It is but an exchange of honor for honor; of honor from God, which is a free gift, for honor from us, which is a just duty; of honor from him our sovereign Lord, for honor from us his poor vassals; of honor from the most high Majesty of heaven, for honor from us vile worms creeping on the earth. Such an overture one would think it not only reasonable to accept, but impossible to refuse. For can any man dare not to honor invincible power, infallible wisdom, inflexible justice? Will any man forbear to honor immense goodness and bounty? Yes, it seems there are men so mad as to reject so fair an offer; so bad as to neglect so equal a duty. Let us therefore consider what it is that is here required of us, or wherein this honoring of God consists, that we may thereby discern when we perform this duty, when we are deficient therein.

II. There are several ways of honoring God, or several parts and degrees of this duty; all which we may refer to two sorts, conceiving the duty as a compound, made up of two main ingredients, (correspondent to those two parts in which they reside, and of which our nature consists; which distinction St. Paul suggesteth when he saith, 'Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's;') one of them being as it were the form and soul, the other as the matter and body of the duty.

1. The soul of that honor which is required of us toward God, is that internal esteem and reverence which we should bear in our hearts towards him; importing that we have impressed on our minds such conceptions about him as are worthy of him, suitable to the perfection of his nature, to the eminency of his state, to the just quality of his works and actions: that we apprehend him to be, what he really is, in his nature, superlatively good, wise, powerful, holy, and just: that we ascribe unto him the production and conservation of all beings, together with an intire superintendency over and absolute disposal of all events: that we conceive ourselves obliged to submit unto and acquiesce in all his dispensations of providence, as most wise and most righteous; to rely on the declarations of his mind, (whether in way of assertion or promise,) as infallibly true and certain. In such acts of mind the honoring of God doth

primarily consist. In acts, I say: not in speculative opinions concerning the divine excellencies, such as all men have who are not downright atheists or infidels, floating in the fancy, or dormant in the mind; but in continually present, lively, effectual acts of apprehension and judgment, sinking down into the heart and affections, and quickening them to a congruous, real performance. Such an apprehension of God's power, as shall make us to dread his irresistible hand, shall cause us to despair of prospering in bad courses, shall dispose us to confide in him, as able to perform whatever he wills us to expect from him: such an opinion of his wisdom, as shall keep us from questioning whether that is best which God declares to be so; as shall hinder us from presuming (in compliance with our own shallow reason or vain fancy) to do any thing against God's judgment and advice: such a conceit of God's justice as shall render us careful to perform what his law promises to reward, and fearful to commit what it threatens to punish: such a persuasion concerning God's goodness, as shall kindle in us a hearty affection toward him, shall make us very sensible of his bounty, and ready to yield returns of duty and gratitude unto him; as shall preserve us from being distrustful of his providence, or doubtful in our need and distress of finding relief from him: such a vigorous and fruitful esteem of God in all respects, as shall produce in us dispositions of mind and actions of life agreeable to our various relations and obligations to him; becoming us as his creatures and children, as his subjects and servants. This is indeed the soul of the duty, which being absent, all exterior (how specious soever) either professions or performances are but as pictures, having in them somewhat of resemblance in shape and color, nothing of life: yea, rather as carcasses, not only dead and senseless, but rotten and filthy in God's sight. 'This people,' saith God, 'do honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' Such honor is indeed no honor at all, but impudent abuse and profane mockery: for what can be more abominably vain than for a man to court and cajole him who knows his whole heart, who sees that he either minds not, or means not what he says? It behoves us therefore by all proper means, by contemplating the works and actions of God, (his admirable works of nature,

the wise proceedings of his providence, the glorious dispensations of his grace,) by meditating on his word, by praying for his grace, by observing his law and will, to raise up in our hearts, to foment and cherish this internal reverence, which is the true spring of all piety, the principle which forms and actuates that other sort, coming next to be touched on, being the body of our due honor to God; concurring in its order to the integrity thereof, as without which the interior part would be a kind of ghost, too thin in substance, too remote from sense, too destitute of good fruit and use.

2. This bodily part consists in outward expressions and performances, whereby we declare our esteem and reverence of God, and produce or promote the like in others. For our thus honoring God respects those two ends and effects, the uttering our own, the exciting in others a reverence toward him. And it we may first view in the general or gross bulk thereof; then survey its principal members.

First, in general, God is honored by a willing and careful practice of all piety and virtue for conscience sake, or in avowed obedience to his holy will. This is the most natural expression of our reverence toward him, and the most effectual way of promoting the same in others. A subject cannot better demonstrate the reverence he bears toward his prince than by (with a cheerful diligence) observing his laws; for by so doing he declares that he acknowlegeth the authority, and revereth the majesty which enacted them; that he approves the wisdom which devised them, and the goodness which designed them for public benefit; that he dreads his prince's power, which can maintain them, and his justice, which will vindicate them; that he relies on his fidelity in making good what of protection or of recompense he propounds to the observers of them. No less pregnant a signification of our reverence toward God do we yield in our gladly and strictly obeying his laws; thereby evidencing our submission to God's sovereign authority, our esteem of his wisdom and goodness, our awful regard to his power and justice, our confidence in him, and dependence on his word. As also the practice of wholesome laws, visibly producing good fruits, (peace and prosperity in the commonwealth,) doth conciliate respect unto the prince, he thereby appearing wise and

good, able to discern and willing to choose what confers to public benefit; so actions conformable to the divine law being (by God's wise and gracious disposal) both in themselves comely and lovely, and in effect, as St. Paul saith, 'good and profitable to men;' conducing indeed not only to private, but also to public welfare, to the rendering human society comfortable, to the settling and securing common tranquillity, the performance of them must needs bring great commendation to the author and ordainer of them. By observing them we shall, as St. Peter speaks, 'set forth the virtues of him that called us' to such a practice. The light and lustre of good works done in regard to divine command, will cause men to see clearly the excellencies of our most wise and gracious Lord; will consequently induce and excite them 'to glorify our Father which is in heaven.' 'In this,' saith our Saviour, 'is my Father glorified, if you bear much fruit.' The goodliness to the sight, the pleasantness to the taste, which is ever perceptible in those fruits which genuine piety beareth, the beauty men see in a calm mind and a sober conversation, the sweetness they taste from works of justice and charity, will certainly produce veneration to the doctrine which teacheth such things, and to the authority which enjoins them. It is an aggravation of impiety, often insisted on in Scripture, that it slurs, as it were, and defames God, brings reproach and obloquy on him, causes his name to be profaned, to be cursed, to be blasphemed: and it is answerably a commendation of piety, that by the practice thereof we (not only procure many great advantages to ourselves, many blessings and comforts here, all joys and felicities hereafter; but do also thereby) beget esteem to God himself, and sanctify his ever-blessed name; cause him to be regarded and reverenced, his name to be praised and blessed among men. It is by exemplary piety, by 'providing things honest in the sight of all men;' by doing things honorable and laudable, (such are all things which God hath been pleased to command us,) that we shall be sure to fulfil that precept of St. Paul, of 'doing all things to the glory of God;' which is the body of that duty we speak of.

Secondly, but there are, deserving a particular inspection,

some members thereof, which in a peculiar and eminent manner do constitute this honor: some acts which more signally conduce to the illustration of God's glory. Such are,

1. The frequent and constant performance (in a serious and reverent manner) of all religious duties, or devotions immediately addressed to God, or conversant about him: that which the Psalmist styles, 'giving the Lord the honor due to his name, worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness.'

2. Using all things peculiarly related unto God, his holy name, his holy word, his holy places, (the places 'where his honor dwelleth,') his holy times, (religious fasts and festivities,) with especial respect.

3. Yielding due observance to the deputies and ministers of God (both civil and ecclesiastical) as such, or because of their relation to God: the doing of which God declares that he interprets and accepts as done unto himself.

4. Freely spending what God hath given us (out of respect unto him) in works of piety, charity, and mercy; that which the wise man calls, 'honoring the Lord with our substance.'

5. All penitential acts, by which we submit unto God, and humble ourselves before him. As Achan, by confessing of his sin, is said to 'give glory to the Lord God of Israel.'

6. Cheerful undergoing afflictions, losses, disgraces, for the profession of God's truth, or for obedience to God's commands. (As St. Peter is said 'by his death,' suffered on such accounts, 'to glorify God.'

These signal instances of this duty (represented as such in holy Scripture) for brevity's sake I pass over; craving leave only to consider one, most pertinent to our present business, and indeed a very comprehensive one; which is this:

7. We shall especially honor God, by discharging faithfully those offices which God hath intrusted us with; by improving diligently those talents which God hath committed to us; by using carefully those means and opportunities which God hath vouchsafed us, of doing him service, and promoting his glory. Thus he to whom God hath given wealth, if he expend it (not to the nourishment of pride and luxury, not only to the gratifying his own pleasure or humor, but) to the furtherance of

God's honor, or to the succor of his indigent neighbor, (in any pious or charitable way,) he doth thereby in especial manner honor God. He also on whom God hath bestowed wit and parts, if he employ them (not so much in contriving projects to advance his own petty interests, or in procuring vain applause to himself, as) in advantageously setting forth God's praise, handsomely recommending goodness, dexterously engaging men in ways of virtue, (doing which things is true wit and excellent policy indeed,) he doth thereby remarkably honor God. He likewise that hath honor conferred on him, if he subordinate it to God's honor, if he use his own credit as an instrument of bringing credit to goodness, thereby adorning and illustrating piety, he by so doing doth eminently practice this duty. The like may be said of any other good quality, any capacity or advantage of doing good: by the right use thereof we honor God: for that men, beholding the worth of such good gifts, and feeling the benefit emergent from them, will be apt to bless the donor of them; as did they in the gospel, who, seeing our Saviour cure the paralytic man, did presently 'glorify God, who had given such power unto men.' But especially they to whom power and authority is committed, as they have the chief capacity, so they are under an especial obligation thus to honor God: they are particularly concerned to hear and observe that royal proclamation, 'Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the honor due unto his name.' When such persons (like king Nebuchadnezzar returned to his right senses) do seriously acknowlege their power and eminency derived from God alone; when they profess subjection unto him, and express it in their practice, not only driving others by their power, but drawing them by their example, to piety and goodness; when they cause God's name to be duly worshipped, and his laws to be strictly observed; when they favor and encourage virtue, discourage and chastise wickedness; when they take care that justice be impartially administered, innocence protected, necessity relieved, all iniquity and oppression, all violence and disorder, yea, so much as may be, all affliction and wretchedness be prevented or removed; when they by all means strive to promote both

the service of God, and the happiness of men, ('dispensing' equally and benignly to the family over which their Lord hath set them, 'their meat in due season;' providing that men under them 'may live a peaceable and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty;' doing which is the business allotted to them, the interest, as it were, of God, which he declares himself concernedly to tender, and by their ministry to prosecute;) when they carefully do such things, then do they indeed approve themselves worthy honorers of their high Master and heavenly King; then do they truly act God's part, and represent his person decently. When the actions of these visible gods are so divinely good and beneficial, men will be easily induced, yea, can hardly forbear to reverence and magnify the invisible Founder of their authority. By so doing, as they will set before men's eyes the best pattern of loyalty; as they will impress on men's hearts the strongest argument for obedience and respect toward themselves; as they shall both more plainly inform and more effectually persuade people to the performance of their duty unto them, than by all the law and all the force in the world; as they will thereby consequently best secure and maintain their own honor, and their own welfare, (for men will never be heartily loyal and submissive to authority till they become really good; nor will they ever be very good till they see their leaders such;) so they will together greatly advance the praise and glory of him in whose name they rule, to whose favor they owe their power and dignity; 'in whose hand,' as the prophet saith, 'is their breath, and whose are all their ways.' For all men will be ready most awfully to dread him, unto whom they see princes themselves humbly to stoop and bow; no man will be ashamed or unwilling to serve him, whom he shall observe that his lords and governors do concern themselves to worship: the world cannot but have a good opinion of him, a participation of whose power and majesty yields such excellent fruits; it will not fail to adore him, whose shadows and images are so venerable. It is a most notorious thing, both to reason and in experience, what extreme advantage great persons have, especially by the influence of their practice, to bring God himself, as it were, into credit; how much it is in their power

easily to render piety a thing in fashion and request. For in what they do, they never are alone, or are ill attended; whither they go, they carry the world along with them: they lead crowds of people after them, as well when they go in the right way, as when they run astray. The custom of living well, no less than other modes and garbs, will be soon conveyed and propagated from the court; the city and country will readily draw good manners thence, (good manners truly so called, not only superficial forms of civility, but real practices of goodness). For the main body of men goeth not *qua eundum, sed qua itur,* not according to rules and reasons, but after examples and authorities; especially of great persons, who are like stars, shining in high and conspicuous places, by which men steer their course: their actions are to be reckoned not as single or solitary ones, but are, like their persons, of a public and representative nature, involving the practice of others, who are by them awed, or shamed into compliance. Their good example especially hath this advantage, that men can find no excuse, can have no pretence why they should not follow it. Piety is not only beautified, but fortified by their dignity; it not only shines in them with a clearer lustre, but with a mightier force and influence: a word, a look, (the least intimation) from them will do more good than others' best eloquence, clearest reason, most earnest endeavors. For it is in them, if they would apply themselves to it, as the wisest prince implies, to 'scatter iniquity with their eyes.' A smile of theirs were able to enliven virtue, and diffuse it all about; a frown might suffice to mortify and dissipate wickedness. Such apparently is their power of honoring God; and in proportion thereto surely great is their obligation to do it: of them peculiarly God expects it, and all equity exacts it. What the meaner rank of servants (who are employed in baser drudgeries, whose fare is more coarse, whose wages are more scant, who stand at greater distance from their lord, and receive no such ample or express marks of his favor, what these) do is of some consequence indeed, but doth not import so much to the master's reputation; their good word concerning him, their good carriage toward him doth not credit him so much.

But those whom he employs in matters of highest trust and importance to his affairs, whom he places in the nearest degree to himself, (seats even in his own throne, on his own tribunal,) whom he feeds plentifully and daintily, maintains in a handsome garb, allows largely, as their deportment doth much reflect on their lord's esteem, as they are highly capable of advancing his repute; so all the rules of ingenuity and gratitude, all the laws of justice and equity do oblige them earnestly to endeavor it. And it is indeed no less their concernment to do so. For if there be disorders prejudicial to the master's honor and interest frequently committed in the family, it is those servants must be responsible; if due order be there kept to his glory and advantage, they shall chiefly be commended, and peculiarly hear the *euge, bone serve:* they must be loaded with other men's faults, or crowned for other men's virtues, as their behavior hath respectively contributed to them. Those universal rules of equity, proposed in the gospel, will, in God's reckoning with and requiting men, be punctually observed: 'to whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required;' answerable to the improvement of what is delivered in trust shall the acceptance be.

I have insisted somewhat more largely on this point, because our text hath a particular aspect thereon; the words being uttered on occasion of Eli, then judge in Israel, his not using authority to these purposes; his forbearing to redress a grievous abuse, committed by his own sons, to the disservice and dishonor of God. Whence to persons of his rank is this law especially directed; on them is this duty chiefly incumbent; on them assuredly, (as sure as God is true,) if they will observe the duty, the reward shall be conferred. God will certainly not only preserve the honor they have already, but will accumulate more honors on them.

These are general truths; the particular application of them is ours. God, I pray, vouchsafe his grace and blessing, that it may be made to our benefit and comfort.

III. I should now show why the duty is required of us, or how reasonable it is. I must not (and the matter is so palpable that I need not) spend many words on that. God surely

doth not exact honor from us because he needs it, because he is the better for it, because he, for itself, delights therein. For (beside that he cannot want any thing without himself, that he cannot any wise need mortal breath to praise him,* or hands of flesh to serve him, who hath millions of better creatures than we absolutely at his devotion, and can with a word create millions of millions more fitter than we to honor him) the best estimation we can have of him is much below him; the best expression we can make is very unworthy of him. He is infinitely excellent, beyond what we can imagine or declare: his 'name is exalted above all blessing and praise; his glory is above the earth and heaven.' So that all our endeavors to honor him are, in comparison to what is due, but defects, and in a manner disparagements to him. It is only then (which should affect our ingenuity to consider) his pure goodness that moves him, for our benefit and advantage, to demand it of us.

1. For that to honor God is the most proper work of reason; that for which primarily we were designed and framed; (for as other things were made to afford the matter and occasion, so man was designed to exercise the act of glorifying God:) whence the performance thereof doth preserve and perfect our nature; to neglect it being unnatural and monstrous.

2. For that also it is a most pleasant duty. He is not a man, (hath lost all natural ingenuity and humanity,) who doth not delight to make some returns thither, where he hath found much good will, whence he hath felt great kindness. Since then all the good we have, we have received from God's favor, it cannot but be very pleasant to render somewhat of requital, as it were, unto him; and we can render no other but this. We cannot make God more rich, more joyful, more happy than he is: all that we can do is, to express our reverence toward him.

3. For that likewise our honoring God disposes us to the imitation of him, (for what we do reverence we would resemble,)

* Ἀκήρατος γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἡ οὐσία καὶ ἀνενδεὴς οὖσα, οὐδενὸς ἑτέρου προσδεῖται· οἱ δὲ αἰνοῦντες αὐτὸν λαμπρότεροι γίνονται.—Chrysost. in Psal. cxliv. et vide in Psal. ciii.

that is, to the doing those things wherein our chief perfection and happiness consists, whence our best content and joy doth spring.

4. In fine, for that the practice of this duty is most profitable and beneficial to us; unto it by an eternal rule of justice our final welfare and prosperity being annexed: whence God hath declared it to be the way and condition of our attaining that thing which we so like and prize, honor to ourselves; the which by promise he hath engaged himself to confer on those who honor him. And,

IV. This promise he makes good several ways: some of them I shall briefly suggest.

1. The honoring God is of itself an honorable thing; the employment which ennobles heaven itself, wherein the highest angels do rejoice and glory. It is the greatest honor of a servant to bring credit to his master, of a subject to spread his prince's renown, and (on grounds vastly more obliging) of a creature to glorify his Maker: that we may do so is an honor we should be glad, may be proud of.

2. By honoring God we are immediately instated in great honor; we enter into most noble relations, acquire most illustrious titles, enjoy most glorious privileges; we become the friends and favorites of heaven, are adopted into God's family, and are styled his children; do obtain a free access unto him, a sure protection under him, a ready assistance from him in all our needs. And what honor can exceed, can equal this?

3. God hath so ordered it, that honor is naturally consequent on the honoring him. God hath made goodness a noble and a stately thing; hath impressed on it that beauty and majesty which commands an universal love and veneration, which strikes presently both a kindly and an awful respect into the minds of all men. 'The righteous is' (not only in himself, but in common esteem) 'more excellent than his neighbor.' Power may be dreaded, riches may be courted, wit and knowlege may be admired; but only goodness is truly esteemed and honored.* Not only men of goodness and discre-

* Γίνου τοῦ πλησίον τιμιώτερος ἐκ τοῦ φανῆναι χρηστότερος, &c.—Naz. Orat. de Paup.

tion, but even the vulgar sort of men, (yea, as Plato hath well observed, the worst men) do pass this judgment, do prefer true goodness above all things.*

4. God, by his extraordinary providence, as there is reason and occasion, doth interpose so as to procure honor to them, to maintain and further their reputation who honor him. God 'fashioneth the hearts of men:' the hearts of the greatest men are in his hand; 'he turneth them as the rivers of waters, whithersoever he will:' he consequently raiseth or depresseth us, as he pleases, in the judgments and affections of men. 'When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him,' saith the wise man; that is, he disposeth the most averse minds to love and honor him. No envy can supplant, no slander can deface the credit of such a person; since God hath taken it into his charge and care, since he hath said it, that 'he will bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon day.' God also by secret methods, and undiscernible trains, ordereth all events, managing our thoughts and designs, our enterprises and actions so, that the result of them shall be matter of benefit, comfort, and reputation, or of disaster, regret, and disgrace, as he thinks good. Victory and success he absolutely disposeth of, and consequently of the honor that follows them; and they do usually attend the honors of God: for, as it is in the Psalm, 'a good success have they who keep his commandments.' Many are the instances of persons, (such as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Job, and Daniel,) who, for their signal honoring of God, from a base and obscure, or from an afflicted and forlorn condition, have, in ways strange and wonderful, been advanced to eminent dignity, have been rendered most illustrious, by the providence of him, who 'raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the beggar out of the dunghill,

Is gloria maxime excellit, qui virtute plurimum præstat.—Cic.

Κατ' ἀλήθειαν ὁ ἀγαθὸς μόνος τιμητός.—Arist. Eth. iv. 3.

Adeo gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum sit etiam malis probare meliora.—Sen. de Benef. iv. 17.

* Θεῖόν τι καὶ εὔστοχόν ἐστι καὶ τοῖς κακοῖς· ὥστε πάμπολλοι τῶν σφόδρα κακῶν εὖ τοῖς λόγοις καὶ ταῖς δόξαις διαιροῦνται τοὺς ἀμείνους τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ τοὺς χείρους.—Plat. de Repub. xii.

to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.' He doth it in an evident manner and eminent degree, to some; he doth it in a convenient way, and competent measure, to all that honor him.

5. Whereas men are naturally inclined to bear much regard to the judgment of posterity concerning them, are desirous to leave a good name behind them, and to have their memory retained in esteem: God so disposes things, that 'the memory of the just shall be blessed;' that 'his righteousness shall be had in everlasting remembrance;' that 'his light shall rejoice,' (or burn clearly and pleasantly, even when his life is put out here.) No spices can so embalm a man, no monument can so preserve his name and memory, as a pious conversation, whereby God hath been honored and men benefited.* The fame of such a person is, in the best judgments, far more precious and truly glorious than is the fame of those who have excelled in any other deeds or qualities. For what sober man doth not in his thoughts afford a more high and hearty respect to those poor fishermen, who by their heroical activity and patience did honor God in the propagation of his heavenly truth, than to all those Hectors in chivalry, those conquerors and achievers of mighty exploits, (those Alexanders and Cæsars,) who have been renowned for doing things which seemed great, rather than for performing what was truly good? To the honor of those excellent poor men, conspicuous monuments have been erected every where; anniversary memorials of their names and virtues are celebrated; they are never mentioned or thought of without respect; their commendations are interwoven with the praises of their great Lord and Maker, whom they honored.†

6. Lastly, to those who honor God here, God hath reserved an honor infinitely great and excellent, in comparison whereto all honors here are but dreams, the loudest acclamations of mortal men are but empty sounds, the brightest glories of this

* Ἀνάγκη, ὡς ἔοικε, μέλειν ἡμῖν καὶ τοῦ ἔπειτα χρόνου· ἐπειδὴ καὶ τυγχάνουσι κατά τινα φύσιν, οἱ μὲν ἀνδραποδωδέστατοι, οὐδὲν φροντίζοντες αὐτοῦ· οἱ δ' ἐπιεικέστατοι, πᾶν ποιοῦντες ὅπως ἂν εἰς τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον εὖ ἀκούωσιν.—Plat. Epist. ii.

† Τῶν δὲ δούλων τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τὰ σήματα λαμπρὰ, καὶ ἡμέραι καταφανεῖς, ἑορτὴν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ποιοῦσαι, &c.—Chrys. in 2 Cor. Or. 27.

world are but duskish and fleeting shadows; an honor most solid, most durable; 'an eternal weight of glory.' They shall, in the face of all the world, be approved by the most righteous Judge's unquestionable sentence; they shall be esteemed in the unanimous opinion of angels and saints; they shall be applauded by the general voice and attestation of heaven; they shall then be seated on unmoveable thrones, their heads encircled with unfading crowns, their faces shining with rays of unconceivable glory and majesty. The less of honor they have received here in this transitory moment of life, the more thereof they shall enjoy in that future eternal state; where, with him who, through the whole course of his life, 'sought not his own honor, but the honor of him that sent him;' who, 'for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honor;' who, 'for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set at the right hand of God;' with those who consecrated all their endeavors, and who sacrificed their lives to the promoting of God's honor, they shall possess everlasting glory. Which, together with them, God Almighty of his infinite mercy grant unto us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever all honor and praise. Amen.

SUMMARY OF SERMON V.

PROVERBS, CHAP. X.—VERSE 9.

THE heads of men are generally very busy in contrivance, and their mouths are full of talk about consulting their safety or securing their interests. We might presume therefore that any infallible maxim of policy, which proposed the most expedite and certain method of security in all our transactions, would be entertained with acceptance. Such an one does the greatest politician and wisest of men here suggest to us. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.* In the explication of this aphorism, the practice itself is first briefly described: next some considerations are proposed to show that security does attend it.

To walk, as well in holy Scripture as in other writings, signifies our usual course of dealing, or the constant tenor of our practice. *Uprightly*, according to the original, might be rendered *in perfection*, or *with integrity*; and by the Greek translators is in several places supposed chiefly to denote sincerity and purity of intention. In effect, the phrase, *he that walketh uprightly*, imports one who is constantly disposed in his designs and dealings to regard the rules of his duty and the dictates of his conscience, in conformity to sound reason and God's law: this point enlarged on.

That such a person proceeds ever with security, may appear from the following considerations.

I. An upright walker is secure of easily finding his way; since it requires no great reach of wit or depth of judgment, no laborious diligence of inquiry, to discern in any case what is

just. The ways of iniquity and vanity shown to be difficult and perplexing; but those of truth so simple, uniform, and clear, that we can hardly miss or swerve from them: these points enlarged on and illustrated from Scripture.

II. The upright walker treads on firm ground. He builds not his practice on the perilous bogs, treacherous quagmires, and devouring quicksands of bold and impious paradoxes, (like those invented by Epicurus, Machiavel, and others whose names are too well known, as the effects of their pestilent notions are too much felt,) but on solid, safe, and well tried principles: these enumerated and explained.

III. The upright person walks steadily, maintaining his principal resolutions, and holding his main course, through all occasions, without wavering or fickleness; his integrity being an excellent ballast against the waves of temptation. Lust, passion, humor, interest, are things very mutable, as depending on temper of body, casualties of time, winds and tides of this vertiginous world: whence he that is guided by them must needs be *many-minded,* and *unstable in all his ways:* but a good conscience is steady and remains so through all circumstances of time, and in all vicissitudes of fortune, &c.

IV. The way of uprightness is the surest for dispatch, and the shortest cut towards the attainment or execution of any good purpose; securing a man from irksome expectations and tedious delays. It is in Scripture called *the strait and plain way.* As in geometry, of all lines or surfaces contained within the same bounds, the straight line and the plain surface are the shortest; so is it also in morality: this topic enlarged on.

V. The way of uprightness is in itself very safe, free from danger, tending to no mischief; according to the saying of the wise man, *there shall no evil happen to the just.* He that designeth only what is just and reasonable will probably not receive much trouble from the world: he may be sure that few

wise men, and no good men, will annoy him, but will rather afford countenance to his undertakings. He will assuredly have the favorable protection of Almighty God; and whatever the success of his undertakings may be, the sequel will be tolerable; for his conscience will be safe, his credit intire, and his hopes good, &c.

VI. The way of uprightness is fair and pleasant: a hopeful confidence and a cheerful satisfaction ever wait on him that walketh in it: this topic fully treated; showing how true it is on all accounts, that, according to the psalmist's assertion, *light is sown for the righteous, and joyful gladness for the upright in heart.*

VII. He that walketh uprightly is secure as to his honor and credit: by pure integrity a man first maintains a due respect and esteem for himself, and then preserves an intire reputation with others: he reflects on his own heart with complacency, and looks on the world with confidence. The issue of all his dealings will assuredly be creditable to him; for God himself will be concerned to vindicate his reputation. If he finds good success, it will not occasion envy; if he seems disappointed, he will not be disparaged.

VIII. The particular methods of acting to which uprightness disposes us, yield great security from troubles and crosses. The conduct which the upright man observes in his transactions with the world fully stated: this shown to be the most secure possible, affording him many great advantages, exempting him from manifold fears and cares and crosses.

IX. An upright walker hath perfect security, as to the final result of affairs, that he shall not be quite baffled in his expectations and desires. If prosperity consists in a satisfaction of mind concerning events, he cannot fail of it. *Whatsoever he doeth*, says the psalmist of him, *it shall prosper:* this explained. He cannot be much defeated in his purposes, for his principal designs being to please God and procure his favor,

to benefit his neighbor and do good to his own soul, they cannot fail of accomplishment. To a person so disposed, that success which seems most adverse, may often be reputed the most happy, as producing ends incomparably more excellent than any worldly gain. If this does not satisfy grosser apprehensions, it may be added that even in these meaner concerns Almighty God is pleased commonly to reward and encourage upright persons by the best success; having as it were an inclination to gratify those who desire to please him. As the psalmist expresses it, *he hath pleasure* in the prosperity of his servants.

X. In conclusion; it is an infinite advantage of upright dealing, that at the last issue, when all things shall be most accurately tried and impartially decided, a man is sure to be fully justified in it, and plentifully rewarded for it. As then all the deceits which now pass under specious masks, shall be laid bare, all contrivers of mischief or practisers of guile shall be exposed to shame and *lie down in sorrow;* so then the righteous man shall stand in great boldness; his case shall be cleared from all slanderous aspersions; what he hath done shall be approved; what he hath suffered shall be repaired: for *in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, every man's work shall be made manifest.*

SERMON V.

UPRIGHT WALKING SURE WALKING.

PROVERBS, CHAP. X.—VERSE 9.

He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.

THE world is much addicted to the politics; the heads of men are very busy in contrivance, and their mouths are full of talk about the ways of consulting our safety, and securing our interests. May we not therefore presume that an infallible maxim of policy, proposing the most expedite and certain method of security in all our transactions, will be entertained with acceptance? Such an one the greatest politician and wisest man for business (if we may take God's own word for it) that ever was or will be, doth here suggest to us. For the practice couched in our text he otherwhere voucheth for a point of policy, telling us that 'a man of understanding walketh uprightly;' and here he recommendeth it as a method of security, 'he that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.'

Treating on which aphorism, I shall, by God's help, endeavor, first, in way of explication, briefly to describe the practice itself; then, in way of proof, by some considerations to declare that security doth attend it.

For explication. 'To walk' (as well in the style of holy Scripture as in other writings, and even in common speech) doth signify our usual course of dealing, or the constant tenor of our practice.

'Uprightly,' according to the original, (בתום) might be ren-

dered, 'in perfection,' or 'with integrity:' and by the Greek translators in several places is supposed chiefly to denote sincerity and purity of intention.

In effect the phrase, 'he that walketh uprightly,' doth import one who is constantly disposed in his designs and dealings to bear a principal regard to the rules of his duty, and the dictates of his conscience; who in every case emergent is ready to perform that, which on good deliberation doth appear most just and fit, in conformity to God's law and sound reason, without being swayed by any appetite, any passion, any sinister respect to his own private interest of profit, credit, or pleasure, to the commission of any unlawful, irregular, unworthy, or base act; who generally doth act out of good principles; (namely, reverence to God, charity to men, sober regard to his own true welfare;) who doth aim at good ends, that is, at God's honor, public benefit, his own salvation, other good things subordinate to those, or well consistent with them; who doth prosecute his designs by lawful means, in fair ways, such as honest providence and industry, veracity and fidelity, dependence on God's help, and prayer for his blessing: in short, one who never advisedly doth undertake any bad thing, nor any good thing to ill purposes; nor doth use any foul means to compass his intents.

For proof. That such an one doth ever proceed with much security, from the following considerations may appear.

I. An upright walker is secure of easily finding his way. For it commonly requireth no reach of wit or depth of judgment, no laborious diligence of inquiry, no curious intentness of observation, no solicitous care, or plodding study, to discern in any case what is just; we need not much trouble our heads about it, for we can hardly be to seek for it. If we will but open our eyes, it lieth in view before us, being the plain, straight, obvious road which common reason prompteth, or which ordinary instruction pointeth out to us: so that usually that direction of Solomon is sufficient, 'let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look straight before thee.—Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left.'

The ways of iniquity and vanity, (if we may call them 'ways' which indeed are but exorbitances and seductions from the

way,) ill designs and bad means of executing designs, are very unintelligible, very obscure, abstruse, and intricate; being infinitely various, and utterly uncertain: so that out of them to pick and fix on this or that may puzzle our heads, and perplex our hearts; as to pursue any of them may involve us in great difficulty and trouble. But the ways of truth, of right, of virtue, are so very simple and uniform, so fixed and permanent, so clear and notorious, that we can hardly miss them, or (except wilfully) swerve from them. For they by divine wisdom were chalked out, not only for ingenious and subtile persons, (men of great parts, of refined wits, of long experience,) but rather for the vulgar community of men, the great body of God's subjects, consisting in persons of meanest capacity and smallest improvement: being designed to 'make wise the simple,' to 'give the young man knowlege and discretion:' to direct all sorts of people in their duty, toward their happiness; according to that in the prophet, 'A high way shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness — the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.'

They are in very legible characters graven by the finger of God on our hearts and consciences, so that by any considerate reflexion inwards we may easily read them: or they are extant in God's word, there written as with a sunbeam, so perspicuously expressed, so frequently inculcated, that without gross negligence or strange dulness we cannot but descry them. For who with half an eye may not see that the practice of pious love and reverence toward God, of intire justice and charity toward our neighbor, of sober temperance and purity toward ourselves, is approved by reason, is prescribed by God to us?

Hence in the holy Scriptures, as bad ways are called dark, crooked, rough, slippery ways; so the good ways are said to be clear, plain, direct, even ways: 'The path of the just,' say they, 'is as a shining light.' 'All the words of my mouth are plain to him that understandeth,'† (or, 'that considereth' them.) 'My foot standeth in an even place.' 'The law of his God is in his heart: and none of his steps shall slide.'

Hence it is affirmed that an upright man doth hardly need any conduct beside his own honesty. For, 'the integrity,'

saith Solomon, 'of the upright shall guide them;' and, 'the righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way.'

But in case such an one should ever be at a stand or at a loss, in doubt of his course, he hath always at hand a most sure guide to conduct or direct him. It is but asking the way of him, or saying with the psalmist, 'show me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths; teach me to do thy will,' and, 'lead me in the way everlasting; O let me not wander from thy commandments:' and then 'his ears,' as the prophet saith, 'shall hear a word behind him, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it;' then the words of the psalmist shall be verified, 'What man is he that feareth the Lord?' 'Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.' 'The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek he will teach his way.'

Hence is the upright man happily secured from tiring pains in the search, from racking anxieties in the choice, from grating scruples and galling regrets in the pursuit of his way.

II. The upright walker doth tread on firm ground. He doth build his practice, not on the perilous bogs, the treacherous quagmires, the devouring quicksands of uncouth, bold, impious paradoxes, (such as have been vented by Epicurus, by Machiavel, by others more lately, whose infamous names are too well known, as the effects of their pestilent notions are too much felt;) but on solid, safe, approved, and well-tried principles; namely, these, and the like coherent with them: that there is an eternal God, incomprehensibly powerful, wise, just, and good; who is always present with us, and ever intent on us; viewing not only all our external actions, (open and secret,) but our inmost cogitations, desires, and intentions, by the which our actions chiefly are to be estimated: that he, as governor of the world, and judge of men, doth concern himself in all human affairs, disposing and managing all events according to his righteous pleasure; exacting punctual obedience to his laws, and dispensing recompenses answerable thereto; with impartial justice rewarding each man according to the purposes of his heart and the practices of his life: that all our good and happiness doth absolutely depend on God's favor; so that to please him can only be true wisdom, and to offend him the greatest folly: that virtue is incomparably the

best endowment whereof we are capable, and sin the worst mischief to which we are liable: that no worldly good or evil is considerable in comparison with goods or evils spiritual: that nothing can be really profitable or advantageous to us, which doth not consist with our duty to God, doth not somewise conduce to our spiritual interest and eternal welfare: yea, that every thing not serviceable to those purposes is either a frivolous trifle, or a dangerous snare, or a notable damage, or a woful bane to us: that content of mind, springing from innocence of life, from the faithful discharge of our duty, from satisfaction of conscience, from a good hope in regard to God and our future state, is in our esteem and choice much to be preferred before all the delights which any temporal possession or fruition can afford; and, that a bad mind is the sorest adversity which can befal us. Such are the grounds of upright practice, more firm than any rock, more unshakeable than the foundations of heaven and earth; the which are assured by the sacred oracles, and attested by many remarkable providences; have ever been avowed by the wiser sort, and admitted by the general consent of men, as for their truth, most agreeable to reason, and for their usefulness, approved by constant experience; the belief of them having apparently most wholesome influence on all the concerns of life, both public and private; indeed, being absolutely needful for upholding government, and preserving human society; no obligation, no faith or confidence between men, no friendship or peace being able to subsist without it. Whence the practice built on such foundations must be very secure. And if God shall not cease to be, if he will not let go the reins, if his word cannot deceive, if the wisest men are not infatuated, if the common sense of mankind do not prove extravagant, if the main props of life and pillars of society do not fail; he that walketh uprightly doth proceed on sure grounds.

III. The upright person doth walk steadily, maintaining his principal resolutions, and holding his main course, through all occasions, without flinching or wavering, or desultory inconsistence and fickleness; his integrity being an excellent ballast, holding him tight and well poised in his deportment; so that waves of temptation dashing on him do not make

him roll in uncertainty, or topple over into unworthy practices.

Lust, passion, humor, interest, are things very mutable, as depending on temper of body, casualties of time, the winds and tides of this vertiginous world: whence he that is guided or moved by them must needs be 'many minded' and 'unstable in all his ways;' will 'reel to and fro like a drunken man, and be at his wit's end;' never enjoying any settled rest of mind, or observing a smooth tenor of action. But a good conscience is very stable, and persisteth unvaried through all circumstances of time, in all vicissitudes of fortune. For it steereth by immoveable pole-stars, the inviolable rules of duty; it aimeth at marks which no force can stir out of their place; its objects of mind and affection are not transitory; its hopes and confidences are fixed on the 'rock of ages.' Whence an upright person in all cases and all conditions, (prosperous or adverse,) is the same man, and goeth the same way. Contingences of affairs do not unhinge his mind from its good purposes, or divert his foot from the right course. Let the weather be fair or foul, let the world smile or frown, let him get or lose by it, let him be favored or crossed, commended or reproached, ('by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report,') he will do what his duty requireth; the external state of things must not alter the moral reason of things with him. This is that which the psalmist observeth of him; 'he shall not be afraid of evil tidings, for his heart standeth fast and believeth in the Lord.' His heart 'is stablished, and will not shrink.' And this the wise man promiseth to him: 'commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.'

Hence a man is secured from diffidence in himself, and distraction in his mind, from frequently being off the hooks, from leading an unequal life, clashing with itself, from deluding and disappointing those with whom he converseth or dealeth, and consequently from the inconveniences issuing thence.

IV. The way of uprightness is the surest for dispatch, and the shortest cut toward the execution or attainment of any good purpose; securing a man from irksome expectations and tedious delays, the which, as the wise man saith, 'do make the heart sick.'

It in Scripture is called 'the straight and the plain way.' And as in geometry, of all lines or surfaces contained within the same bounds, the straight line and the plain surface are the shortest; so it is also in morality: by the right line of justice, on the plain ground of virtue, a man soonest will arrive to any well-chosen end.

In this way there are no bewildering intrigues and mazes, no crooked windings and turnings, no occasions forcing men to dance hither and thither, to skip backward and forward, to do and undo; which courses do protract business, and commonly do hinder from ever dispatching it. But a man acting justly and fairly doth continually proceed on in the direct open road, without retreat, excursion, or deflexion; 'not turning aside (as the phrase is in holy writ) to the right hand or to the left.'

To clamber over fences of duty, to break through hedges of right, to trespass on hallowed inclosures, may seem the most short and compendious ways of getting thither where one would be; but doth not a man venture breaking his neck, or scratching his face, incurring mischief and trouble thereby? Is he not liable to the fate to which the preacher doometh him, 'he that diggeth a pit shall fall into it: and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him?' For instance, to grow rich, fraud, extortion, corruption, oppression, overreaching and supplanting may seem the readiest and most expedite ways; but in truth they are the farthest ways about, or rather no ways at all: for that which is got by those means is not our own; nor is the possession of it truly wealth, but usurpation, or detention of spoil and rapine, which we ought to disgorge. And however to the getting it there are often mighty difficulties occurring from men, there are commonly insuperable obstacles interposed by God; who hath expressly condemned and cursed those ways, declaring that 'wealth gotten by vanity (or cozenage) shall be diminished;' that 'he that oppresseth to increase his riches shall surely come to want;' that 'he who (thus) hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come on him;' that 'as the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst

of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.' Whereas the plain way of honest harmless industry, (joined with a pious regard to him who is the dispenser of all good things,) how slow soever it may seem, is the most speedy, because the only safe way to thrive; having, beside all secondary advantages, the security of those oracles: 'the hand of the diligent shall make rich;' 'he that gathereth by labor shall increase:' 'by humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life.'

V. The way of uprightness is in itself very safe, free of danger, tending to no mischief; according to those sayings of the wise man: 'there shall no evil happen to the just:' 'in the way of righteousness is life, and in the path thereof there is no death.'

He who designeth only that which is just and reasonable, who innocently and fairly prosecuteth his intent, can run no great hazard, cannot fall into any extreme disaster, cannot irrecoverably sink into miserable disappointment.

He probably will not receive much harm from men, or trouble from the world: for as he meaneth innocently, as he dealeth inoffensively, (not violently assailing, nor fraudulently circumventing, not any wise injuriously or maliciously abusing any man,) as he doth yield no just provocation or urgent temptation to oppose him; so he is not very likely to meet with obstructions or crosses thwarting his designs. He can hardly raise up adversaries; at least such as will prove very formidable or very fierce and implacable toward him.

He may be sure that few wise men, and no good men, will trouble him; but that such rather will afford their countenance and furtherance to his undertakings.

But assuredly he shall have the favorable protection of Almighty God, who throughly knowing his heart, and observing the righteousness of his intentions and proceedings, will not suffer him to incur any notable, destructive, remediless calamity. His prayer, dictated by good conscience, 'let integrity and uprightness preserve me,' will certainly be heard; God having passed his word for it in numberless places of Scripture; particularly in those remarkable words of Isaiah: 'he that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from

holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: his bread shall be given him, his water shall be sure.' That is, a man who is constantly upright in his dealings, shall by the divine Providence be infallibly and impregnably preserved from any grievous mischief, from any sore want, from any extreme distress.

The way of uprightness is ever guarded with angels, ready to promote the affairs of the honest person, or at least to protect him from evil. He may hopefully say to himself, as Abraham did to his servant, 'The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way.' Or he confidently may apply to himself that of the psalmist, 'He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.'

However, the sequel will be tolerable: whatever the success of his undertaking be, it can be no ruin, no slur, no heart-breaking to him. His conscience is safe, his credit is intire, his hopes are good; he is perfectly secure from being tainted with foul guilt, from being exposed to due reproach, from being stung with vexatious remorse, from being plunged into a gulf of desperation or disconsolateness. For,

VI. The way of uprightness is fair and pleasant. He that walketh in it hath good weather and a clear sky about him; a hopeful confidence and a cheerful satisfaction do ever wait on him. 'It is joy,' as the wise man saith, 'to the just to do judgment.'

Being conscious to himself of an honest meaning, and a due course of prosecuting it, he feeleth no check or struggling of mind, no regret or sting of heart; being throughly satisfied and pleased with what he is about, his judgment approving, and his will acquiescing in his procedure, as worthy of himself, agreeable to reason, and conformable to his duty.

He therefore briskly moveth forward with alacrity and courage; there being within him nothing to control or countermand him, to pull him back, to make him halt, to distract or disturb him.

Nor hardly can any thing abroad dismay or discourage him. For he may reasonably hope for the good will of men, and cannot hugely dread their opposition. He may strongly presume on the propitious aspect and favorable succor of heaven, which always smileth and casteth benign influences on honest undertakings.

He that hath chosen a good way, may with assurance commend his way to God's providence; he may depend on God for his concurrent benediction; he with an humble boldness may address prayers to God for his protection and aid. He so doing hath interest in divers clear declarations and express promises of good success; such as those; 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.' 'The Lord is nigh unto all that call on him in truth: he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and will save them.

He may dare to refer his case to the severest examination, saying with Job, 'Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity;' and with the psalmist, 'Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.'

He with an humble confidence can appeal to God, borrowing the words of Hezekiah, 'I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.'

Hence, 'the hope of the righteous,' as the wise man telleth us, 'is gladness.' He, considering the goodness, the justice, the fidelity of God, whereof his integrity doth render him capable and a proper object, cannot but conceive a comfortable hope of a good issue.

And obtaining success, he doth not only enjoy the material pleasure thereof, but the formal satisfaction that it is indeed good success, or a blessing indulged to him by special favor of God; enabling him to say with the psalmist, 'The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.'

However, an upright dealer hath this comfortable reserve,

that whatever doth befal him, however the business goeth, he shall not condemn and punish himself with remorse; he shall not want a consolation able to support and to erect his mind. He shall triumph, if not in the felicity of his success, yet in the integrity of his heart, and the innocence of his deportment; even as blessed Job did under all the pressures of his adversity: for, 'till I die,' said he, 'I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.'

So true it is on all accounts, that, according to that assertion in the psalm, 'Light is sown for the righteous, and joyful gladness for the upright in heart.'

VII. He that walketh uprightly is secure as to his honor and credit. He is sure not to come off disgracefully, either at home in his own apprehensions, or abroad in the estimations of men. He doth not blush at what he is doing, nor doth reproach himself for what he hath done. No blemish or blame can stick on his proceeding.

By pure integrity a man first maintaineth a due respect and esteem for himself, then preserveth an intire reputation with others: he reflecteth on his own heart with complacence, and looketh on the world with confidence. He hath no fear of being detected, or care to smother his intents. He is content that his thoughts should be sounded, and his actions sifted to the bottom. He could even wish that his breast had windows, that his heart were transparent, that all the world might see through him, and descry the clearness of his intentions. The more curiously his ways are marked, the more exactly his dealings are scanned, the more throughly his designs are penetrated and known; the greater approbation he is sure to receive.

The issue of things assuredly will be creditable to him; and when the day-light hath scattered all mists, hath cleared all misprisions and mistakes, his reputation will shine most brightly: the event declaring, that he had no corrupt ends; the course of his proceedings being justified by the very light of things.

God himself will be concerned to vindicate his reputation, not suffering him to be considerably defamed; according to

that promise, 'He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.' That in Job will be made good to him, 'Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;' and he may confidently aver with the psalmist, 'Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.'

If he findeth good success, it will not be invidious, appearing well deserved, and fairly procured; it will be truly honorable, as a fruit and recompense of virtue, as a mark and pledge of the divine favor toward him.

If he seemeth disappointed, yet he will not be disparaged: wise and candid men will excuse him; good men will patronise his cause; no man of sense and ingenuity will insult on his misfortune. 'He shall not,' as the psalmist assureth, 'be ashamed in an evil time.' Yea, often his repute from under a cloud will shine, if not with so glaring splendor, yet with a pleasant lustre; uprightness disposing him to bear adverse events with a graceful decency.

VIII. The particular methods of acting which uprightness disposeth to observe, do yield great security from troubles and crosses in their transactions.

What is the conduct of the upright man? He is clear, frank, candid, harmless, consistent in all his behavior, his discourse, his dealing. His heart commonly may be seen in his face, his mind doth ever suit with his speech, his deeds have a just correspondence with his professions; he never faileth to perform what he doth promise, and to satisfy the expectations which he hath raised.

He doth not wrap himself in clouds, that none may see where he is, or know how to find him; may discern what he is about, or whither he tendeth.

He disguiseth not his intents with fallacious pretences of conscience, of public good, of special friendship and respect.

He doth use no disingenuous, spiteful, unjust tricks or sleights, to serve the present turn.

He layeth no baits or snares 'to catch men,' alluring them into mischief or inconvenience.

As he doth not affect any poor base ends, so he will not defile his fair intentions by sordid means of compassing them; such as are illusive simulations and subdolous artifices, treacherous collusions, sly insinuations and sycophantic detractions, versatile whifflings and dodgings, flattering colloguings and glozings, servile crouchings and fawnings, and the like.

He hath little of the serpent, (none of its lurking insidiousness, of its surprising violence, of its rancorous venom, of its keen mordacity,) but much of the dove, (all its simplicity, its gentleness, its fidelity, its innocence,) in his conversation and commerce.

His wisdom is ever tempered with sincerity, and seasoned with humanity, with meekness, with charity; being 'the wisdom which is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.'

He sometime may prudently reserve his mind, not venting it by foolish loquacity: but his words do never clash with his meaning, so as to deceive or dissappoint any man.

He may warily prevent harm and decline perils: but it is without hurtful countermining, or deriving mischief on his neighbor.

He may discreetly pick out seasons, and embrace opportunities of righting or benefiting himself: but he never will seek or lay hold of advantages to prejudice others.

He sometimes may repress insurrections of anger or disgust: but he never doth allow them to bake into rancor or malice.

He may be apt to use courteous, affable, obliging demeanor, serving to breed friendships, and to stifle enmities: but he never thereby meaneth to gull, inveigle, and entrap men; or to procure instruments and aids of any perverse design.

He is no enemy to himself, but (according to the obligations of reason and conscience) he hath always a regard to the good of others; nor is ever so selfish as to be unjust or uncharitable to any man.

The principal engines he doth employ for achieving his en-

terprises are, a careful and cautious providence in contriving, a sedulous and steady diligence in acting, a circumspect heedfulness not to provoke any man by offensive carriage, by injury, by discourtesy, to obstruct him, but rather by kind demonstrations and real beneficence to engage men to further him in his proceedings: but especially his main instrument, wherein he most confideth, is devout supplication to God for his succor and blessing.

Now is not this conduct the most secure that can be? doth it not afford many great commodities and advantages? doth it not exempt from manifold fears, and cares, and crosses, and slaveries?

It cannot but derive blessings from the God of truth, the great friend of simplicity and sincerity, the hater of falsehood and guile.

And humanly regarding things, he that useth these methods, doth from them obtain many conveniences. He doth not lie under perpetual constraint, engaged to keep a constant guard on himself, to watch his memory, to curb his tongue, to manage his very looks and gestures, lest they betray his intentions, and disclose his plots. He is not at the trouble of stopping holes, of mending flaws, of patching up repugnances in his actions, that his mind do not break through them. He is not afraid of the disappointment and shame which attend the detection of unworthy designs. He is not at pains to obviate the jealousies, the surmises, the diffidences, the counterplots, the preventive oppositions and assaults which gloomy closeness and crafty dissimulation ever do raise against the practisers of them. In fine, men do not shun the conversation and the commerce of an upright person, but gladly do consort and deal with them; do seek his acquaintance and alliance: they are not apt to distrust him, to suspect him, to be shy and reserved in their intercourse with him; but readily do place an intire confidence in him, and use a clear frankness toward him. No man doth fear him as dangerous, or will cross him as an adversary. Whence as he seldom hath cause to fear, or occasion to contest with others; so he doth undisturbedly enjoy the benefits of society with great safety, ease, and comfort.

IX. Lastly, an upright walker hath perfect security, as to

the final result of affairs, that he shall not be quite baffled in his expectations and desires. And if prosperity doth consist in a satisfaction of mind concerning events, he cannot fail of most prosperous success. 'Whatsoever he doeth,' saith the psalmist of him, 'it shall prosper.' How is that? Doth he, if he warreth, always get the victory? is he perpetually, when he tradeth, a considerable gainer? will he certainly, after sowing, reap a plentiful crop? Probably yes; and perhaps no. Yet assuredly he shall prosper, in the true notion of prosperity, explained by those divine sayings: 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.' 'The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.' 'Surely I know it shall be well with them that fear God.'

He cannot be much defeated in his purposes: for as to his general, principal, absolute designs, (that is, his design of pleasing God, and procuring his favor; his design of satisfying himself, and discharging his conscience; his design of promoting his own spiritual interest and saving his soul; his design of doing good, of exercising charity to his neighbor, of serving the public, of obliging the world by virtuous example, and by real beneficence;) these he cannot fail throughly to accomplish; nothing can obstruct him in the prosecution, nothing can debar him from the execution of these undertakings; in spite of all the world, by the succor of that divine grace which ever doth favor and further such designs, he most happily will achieve them. And for other inferior designs, he can hardly be crossed in regard to them; for it is an essential part of integrity, not otherwise to affect or aim at private secular interests, than under condition, and with a reservation, if it be God's pleasure, if it seem good to divine wisdom. He knoweth that his pains employed on any honest purpose, in a fair way, (be it to procure some worldly advantage for himself, for his relations, or for his friend,) are not lost, if they have the fruit of submission to God's will, and acquiescence in the event disposed by him. He is assured that it is good luck to have his project blasted, and that missing is better than getting, when by sovereign wisdom it is so determined. He therefore

could not so fix his heart, or engage his affection in any such concern, that his mind is surprised, or his passions discomposed by a seeming adverseness of events to his endeavors. So that in effect he can have no bad success. For how can that occurrence be deemed bad, which plain reason dictateth in certain judgment to be most expedient for him; about which he ever was very indifferent, and with which at present he is not heartily displeased? How can it be taken for disappointment and misfortune, which one was prepared to embrace with satisfaction and complacence?

Yea, to a person so disposed, that success which seemeth most adverse, justly may be reputed the best and most happy, as promoting ends incomparably more excellent than any worldly gain; as producing fruits exceedingly more wholesome and more savory than any temporal commodity; as exercising and improving the divinest virtues, (humility, patience, meekness, moderation, contentedness,) a grain whereof is worth all the wealth, all the preferment, all that is desirable in the world.

Wherefore let the worst that can arrive, (or that which human blindness and fondness do count the worst,) yet upright persons do not come off ill, or so (matters being rightly stated) as to be losers on the foot of the account.

If this do not satisfy grosser apprehensions, we may add, that even in these meaner concerns Almighty God is pleased commonly to reward and encourage upright persons by the best success. For he hath as it were a natural inclination to gratify those who desire to please him; and, as the Psalmist expresseth it, 'hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.' He may seem concerned in honor to countenance those who have regard to his will, and who repose confidence in his aid; discriminating them from such as presume to act against or without him, in defiance to his will, with no deference to his providence. As they do render him his due respect, by submitting to his authority, and avowing his power; so he will acknowlege them by signally favoring their concerns. Even his truth and fidelity are engaged in their behalf; seeing he very often hath declared and promised, that in all matters, and on all occasions, he will be ready to bless them.

X. To conclude; it is an infinite advantage of upright dealing, that at the last issue, when all things shall be most accurately tried and impartially decided, a man is assured to be fully justified in it, and plentifully rewarded for it. As then all the deceits, which now pass under specious masks, shall be laid bare; all varnish of pretence shall be wiped off; all perverse intrigues shall be unravelled; all wicked and base intentions shall be quite stripped of the veils which now enfold them; all shrewd contrivers and engineers of mischief, all practisers of unjust and malicious guile, shall be exposed to shame, 'shall lie down in sorrow:' so then 'the righteous man shall stand in great boldness;' his case will be rightly stated, and fully cleared from slanderous aspersions, from odious surmises, from unlucky prejudices and mistakes: what he hath done shall be approved; what he hath suffered shall be repaired. So that it then evidently will appear that upright simplicity is the deepest wisdom, and perverse craft the meerest shallowness; that he who is true and just to others, is most faithful and friendly to himself; that whoever doth abuse his neighbor, is his own greatest cheater and foe. For, 'in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, every man's work shall be made manifest.' 'The Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.' Unto which our upright Judge, 'the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever.' Amen.

SUMMARY OF SERMON VI.

I THESSALONIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 17.

MANNER in which St. Paul, after discussing main points of doctrine or discipline, frequently proposes good advice and rules of conduct, without any formal method or strict connexion. Example of that in the text. For the understanding of it, we must consider what is meant by the act enjoined, or *praying*, and what is the import of the qualification or circumstance adjoined, *without ceasing*.

1. The word *prayer* does, in its usual latitude of acceptation, comprehend all sorts of devotion, or all that part of religious practice wherein we do immediately address ourselves to God, holding by speech, oral or mental, a kind of intercourse and conversation with him: this point enlarged on. In a stricter sense it signifies only one particular act, the petition of things needful or useful to us. It is in this discourse understood in the first and comprehensive meaning: reasons for this given.

2. Meaning of the expression *without ceasing*. It is not to be understood as if we were obliged, in every instant or singular point of time, actually to apply our minds to prayer; for this is impossible, and therefore can be no matter of duty; is inconsistent with other duties, and therefore must not be practised, &c.; but the precept, like many others of a like general purport and expression, must be understood in a moral rather than a natural sense, according as the exigence of things permits, or the reason of the case requires. Various senses of

which it is capable, propounded on plain testimonies of Scripture, and agreeable to sound reason.

I. *Praying incessantly* may import the maintaining in our souls a ready disposition or habitual inclination to devotion; that which in Scripture is termed *the spirit of supplication*. This shown, according to moral estimation, and current language derived thence, to amount to a continual practice.

II. It may denote a vigilant attendance, with earnest regard and firm purpose, employed on devotion; such attendance as men usually bestow on their affairs, of which the actual prosecution sometimes stops, though the design continually proceeds; the mind ever so directing its eye towards them, as quickly to espy, and readily to snatch any advantages of promoting them: this point enlarged on.

III. It may signify that we do actually embrace all fit seasons and occasions of devotion: this in moral computation passes for continual performance, as a tree is said to bear that fruit which it produces in the season, and a man is accounted to work in that trade which he exercises whenever he is called thereto. Many special occasions enumerated, in which this duty is indispensably required of us, both those which, as it were, outwardly prompt and urge us, and those which spring up within us, which we are no less obliged and concerned to embrace.

IV. *Praying incessantly* may signify that we should with assiduous urgency drive on the intent of our prayers, never quitting it, nor desisting, till our requests are granted, or our desires accomplished: thus doing we may be said to pray continually; as he that goeth forward in his journey, although he may sometimes rest and repose himself, is said yet to be in travel. Instances given in which this practice is recommended by holy Scripture. Shown also to be agreeable to and enforced by reason. Many assurances of good success to this practice in holy Scripture. It is shown that without it we cannot hope to obtain the precious things of God's bounty;

and that for the same reason that we pray at all, we should thus pray with continued instance.

V. *Praying incessantly* may import that we do with all our occupations and all occurrences interlace devout ejaculations of prayer and praise; lifting up our hearts to God, and breathing forth expressions of devotion, suitable to the objects and occasions which present themselves. This seems to be required by St. Paul, when he enjoins us to *pray always in spirit*, and to *sing in the heart*; that is, with very frequent elevations of spirit in holy thoughts and desires toward heaven, since we cannot ever be framing, or venting long prayers with our lips: this point enlarged on.

Other good meanings of this precept, according to which both Scripture and reason oblige us to observe it, are reserved for the next discourse.

SERMON VI.

OF THE DUTY OF PRAYER.

I THESSALONIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 17.

Pray without ceasing.

IT is the manner of St. Paul in his epistles, after that he hath discussed some main points of doctrine or discipline, (which occasion required that he should clear and settle,) to propose several good advices and rules, in the observance whereof the life of Christian practice doth consist. So that he thereby hath furnished us with so rich a variety of moral and spiritual precepts, concerning special matters, subordinate to the general laws of piety and virtue; that out of them might well be compiled a body of ethics, or system of precepts *de officiis*, in truth and in completeness far excelling those which any philosophy hath been able to devise or deliver. These he rangeth not in any formal method, nor linketh together with strict connexion, but freely scattereth them, so as from his mind (as out of a fertile soil, impregnated with all seeds of wisdom and goodness) they did aptly spring up, or as they were suggested by that holy Spirit which continually guided and governed him.

Among divers such delivered here, this is one, which shall be the subject of my present discourse; the which, having no other plain coherence (except by affinity of matter) with the rest inclosing it, I shall consider absolutely by itself, endeavoring somewhat to explain it, and to urge its practice.

'Pray without ceasing.' For understanding these words, let us first consider what is meant by the act enjoined, 'praying;' then, what the qualification or circumstance adjoined, 'without ceasing,' doth import.

1. The word 'prayer' doth, in its usual latitude of acception, comprehend all sorts of devotion, or all that part of religious practice, wherein we do immediately address ourselves to God, having by speech (oral or mental) a kind of intercourse and conversation with him. So it includeth that praise which we should yield to God, implying our due esteem of his most excellent perfections, most glorious works, most just and wise dispensations of providence and grace; that thanksgiving whereby we should express an affectionate resentment of our obligation to him for the numberless great benefits we receive from him; that acknowlegement of our intire dependence on him, or our total subjection to his power and pleasure; together with that profession of faith in him, and avowing of service to him, which we do owe as his natural creatures and subjects; that humble confession of our infirmity, our vileness, our guilt, our misery, (joined with deprecation of wrath and vengeance,) which is due from us as wretched men and grievous sinners; that petition of things needful or convenient for us, (of supply in our wants, of succor and comfort in our distresses, of direction and assistance in our undertakings, of mercy and pardon for our offences,) which our natural state (our poor, weak, sad, and sinful state) doth engage us to seek; that intercession for others, which general charity or special relation do require from us, as concerned or obliged to desire and promote their good. All these religious performances prayer, in its larger notion, doth comprise; according whereto in common use the whole body of divine service, containing all such acts, is termed prayer; and temples, consecrated to the performance of all holy duties, are styled 'houses of prayer;' and that brief directory, or pregnant form of all devotion, which our Lord dictated, is called 'his prayer;' and in numberless places of Scripture it is so taken.

In a stricter sense, it doth only signify one particular act among those, the petition of things needful or useful for us.

But according to the former more comprehensive meaning, I

choose to understand it here; both because it is most commonly so used, (then, especially, when no distinctive limitation is annexed, or the nature of the subject matter doth not restrain it,) and because general reasons do equally oblige to performance of all these duties in the manner here prescribed: nor is there any ground to exclude any part of devotion from continual use; we being obliged no less incessantly to praise God for his excellencies, and thank him for his benefits, to avow his sovereign majesty and authority, to confess our infirmities and miscarriages, than to beg help and mercy from God. All devotion therefore, all sorts of proper and due address to God, (that πᾶσα προσευχὴ, 'all prayer and supplication,' which St. Paul otherwhere speaketh of) are here enjoined, according to the manner adjoined, 'without ceasing,' ἀδιαλείπτως, that is, indefinitely, or continually.

2. For the meaning of which expression, we must suppose that it must not be understood as if we were obliged in every instant or singular point of time actually to apply our minds to this practice; for to do thus is in itself impossible, and therefore can be no matter of duty; it is inconsistent with other duties, and therefore must not be practised; yea, will not consist with itself; for, that we may pray, we must live; that we may live, we must eat; that we may eat, we must work; and must therefore attend other matters: so that actual devotion neither must nor can swallow up all our time and care. The deliberate operations of our mind are sometimes interrupted by sleep, sometimes will be taken up in satisfying our natural appetites, sometimes must be spent in attendance on other reasonable employments, commanded or allowed by God; whence there can be no obligation to this practice according to that unlimited interpretation. This precept therefore (as divers others of a like general purport and expression) must be understood not in a natural but moral sense, according as the exigence of things permitteth, or as the reason of the case requireth; so far as it is conveniently practicable, or as it is reasonably compatible with other duties and needs. But we must not so restrain it as to wrong it, by pinching it within too narrow bounds. How then it may be understood, and how far it should extend, we shall endeavor to declare by propounding divers senses whereof

it is capable, grounded on plain testimonies of Scripture, and enforcible by good reason; according to which senses we shall together press the observance thereof.

I. First then, 'praying incessantly' may import the maintaining in our souls a ready disposition or habitual inclination to devotion; that which in Scripture is termed 'the spirit of supplication.' This in moral esteem, and according to current language, derived thence, amounteth to a continual practice; a man being reckoned and said to do that, to which he is ever prompt and propense: as it is said of the righteous man, that 'he is ever merciful, and lendeth,' because he is constantly disposed to supply his neighbor with needful relief; although he doth not ever actually dispense alms, or furnish his neighbor with supplies for his necessity. The words may signify this; they do at least by consequence imply so much: for if we do not in this, we can hardly perform the duty in any sense; without a good temper fitting, and a good appetite prompting to devotion, we scarce can or will ever apply ourselves thereto. If there be not in our heart a root of devotion, whence should it spring? how can it live or thrive? If the organs of prayer are out of kelter, or out of tune, how can we pray? If we be not *accincti*, have not 'the loins of our mind girt,' and 'our feet shod in preparation' to the service, when shall we set forward thereto? 'My heart,' said David, 'is fixed, I will sing and give praise;' *fixed,* that is, readily prepared, and steadily inclined to devotion. So should ours constantly be. As a true friend is ever ready to entertain his friend with a frank courtesy and complacency; as he ever is apt on occasion for advice and assistance to have recourse to him: so should we be always disposed cheerfully and decently to converse with God, when he freely cometh to us, or we have need to apply ourselves to him. If there be (from stupidity of mind, from coldness of affection, from sluggishness of spirit, from worldly distraction) any indisposition or averseness thereto, we should, by serious consideration and industrious care, labor to remove them; rousing our spirits, and kindling in our affections some fervency of desire toward spiritual things: otherwise we shall be apt to shun, or to slip the opportunities inviting to devotion; our

hearts will be so resty, or listless, that hardly we shall be induced to perform it, when it is most necessary or useful for us.

II. 'Praying incessantly' may denote a vigilant attendance (with earnest regard, and firm purpose) employed on devotion: such attendance as men usually bestow on their affairs, whereof although the actual prosecution sometime doth stick, yet the design continually proceedeth; the mind ever so directing its eye toward them, as quickly to espy, and readily to snatch any advantages of promoting them. This is a kind of continuance in practice, and is commonly so termed: as we say, that such an one is building a house, is writing a book, is occupying such land, although he be at present sleeping, or eating, or following any other business; because his main design never sleepeth, and his purpose continues uninterrupted. This is that which is so often injoined under the phrase of watching about prayer. 'Watch ye therefore, and pray always,' saith our Lord. 'Continue in prayer, and watch in the same,' saith St. Paul. 'Be ye sober, and watch unto prayer,' saith St. Peter. Which expressions import a most constant and careful attendance on this duty: that we do not make it a *πάρεργον*, or bye-business in our life, (a matter of small consideration or indifference, of curiosity, of chance,) to be transacted drowsily or faintly, with a desultorious and slight endeavor, by fits, as the humor taketh us; but that, accounting it a business of the choicest nature and weightiest moment, we do adhere thereto with unmoveable purpose, regard it with undistracted attention, pursue it with unwearied diligence, being always on the guard, wakeful and expedite, intent on and apt to close with any occasion suggesting matter thereof. That we should do thus reason also doth oblige: for that, as in truth no business doth better deserve our utmost resolution and care; so none doth more need them; nature being so backward, and occasion so slippery, that if we do not ever mind it, we shall seldom practise it.

III. 'Praying incessantly' may signify that we do actually embrace all fit seasons and emergent occasions of devotion. This in moral computation doth pass for continual perform-

ance: as a tree is said to bear that fruit which it produceth in the season; and a man is accounted to work in that trade, which he exerciseth whenever he is called thereto. This sense is in several precepts parallel to that in hand plainly expressed. 'Pray,' saith St. Paul, 'with all prayer and supplication,' ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ· and, 'watch,' saith our Lord, ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ δεόμενοι, 'praying in every season,' or on every opportunity. Devotion, indeed, is rarely unseasonable, or impertinent: we may offer it εὐκαίρως, ἀκαίρως, 'in season, and out of season;' that is, not only taking opportunities presented for it, or urgently requiring it, but catching at them, and creating them to ourselves, when there is no such apparent and pressing need of it. But there are some special occasions, which more importunately and indispensably do exact it: some seasons there are, (either ministered by extrinsical accidents, or springing from internal dispositions,) when, without both great blame and much damage to ourselves, we cannot neglect it: times there be most proper and acceptable, when we do especially need to pray, and when we are likely to speed well therein. 'Every one,' saith the psalmist, 'that is godly will pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found:' and, 'my prayer,' saith he again, 'is unto thee in an acceptable time.'

Thus when we have received any singular blessing or notable favor from God, when prosperous success hath attended our honest enterprises, when we have been happily rescued from imminent dangers, when we have been supported in difficulties, or relieved in wants and straits; then is it seasonable to render sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise to the God of victory, help, and mercy; to admire and celebrate him who is our 'strength,' and our 'deliverer,' our 'faithful refuge in trouble,' our 'fortress, and the rock of our salvation.' To omit this piece of devotion then is vile ingratitude, or stupid negligence and sloth.

When any rare object or remarkable occurrence doth, on this theatre of the world, present itself to our view, in surveying the glorious works of nature, or the strange events of Providence; then is a proper occasion suggested to send up hymns of praise to the power, the wisdom, the goodness of the world's great Creator and Governor.

When we undertake any business of special moment and difficulty, then it is expedient (wisdom prompting it) to sue for God's aid, to commit our affairs into his hand, to recommend our endeavors to the blessing of him by whose guidance all things are ordered, without whose concourse nothing can be effected, on whose arbitrary disposal all success dependeth.

The beginning of any design or business (although ordinary, if considerable) is a proper season of prayer unto him to whose bounty and favor we owe our ability to act, support in our proceedings, any comfortable issue of what we do: (for 'all our sufficiency is of him:' 'without him we can do nothing.') Whence we can never apply ourselves to any business or work, not go to eat, to sleep, to travel, to trade, to study, with any true content, any reasonable security, any satisfactory hope, if we do not first humbly implore the favorable protection, guidance, and assistance of God.

When we do fall into doubts or darknesses, (in the course either of our spiritual or secular affairs,) not knowing what course to steer, or which way to turn ourselves; (a case which to so blind and silly creatures as we are must often happen;) then doth the time bid us to consult the great Oracle of truth, 'the mighty Counsellor,' 'the Father of lights,' seeking resolution and satisfaction, light and wisdom from him; saying with the psalmist, 'Show me thy ways, O Lord, lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation.' 'Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me;' following the advice of St. James, 'If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.'

When any storm of danger blustereth about us, perilously threatening or furiously assailing us with mischief, (so that hardly by our own strength or wit we can hope to evade,) then with the wings of ardent devotion we should fly unto God for shelter and for relief.

When any anxious care distracteth, or any heavy burden presseth our minds, we should by prayer ease ourselves of them, and discharge them on God, committing the matter of them to his care and providence; according to that direction of St. Paul, 'be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer

and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.'

When we do lie under any irksome trouble or sore distress, (of want, pain, disgrace,) then for succor and support, for ease and comfort, we should have recourse to 'the Father of pities, and God of all consolation; who is nigh to all that call on him, will also hear their cry, and will save them;' who, when 'the righteous cry, doth hear them, and delivereth them out of all their troubles;' who is so often styled 'the hiding-place from troubles,' 'the help and strength,' 'the shield and buckler,' 'the rock,' 'the fortress,' 'the high tower,' 'the horn of salvation,' to all good and distressed people. To him we should in such a condition have recourse, imitating the pious psalmist, whose practice was this: 'in the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: I poured out my complaint before him, I showed before him my trouble:' 'I called unto the Lord in my distress; the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place.'

When any strong temptation doth invade us, with which by our own strength we cannot grapple, but are like to sink and faulter under it; then is it opportune and needful that we should seek to God for a supply of spiritual forces, and the succor of his almighty grace, as St. Paul did: when 'there was given to him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him;' then 'he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him:' and he had this return from God, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'

When also (from ignorance or mistake, from inadvertency, negligence, or rashness, from weakness, from wantonness, from presumption) we have transgressed our duty, and incurred sinful guilt; then, (for avoiding the consequent danger and vengeance, for unloading our consciences of the burden and discomfort thereof,) with humble confession in our mouths, and serious contrition in our hearts, we should apply ourselves to the God of mercy, deprecating his wrath, and imploring pardon from him; remembering that promise of St. John, 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity;' and that declaration of the wise man 'he that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.'

In these and the like cases God by our necessities doth invite and summon us to come unto him; and no less foolish than impious we are, if we do then slink away or fly from him. Then we should (as the Apostle to the Hebrews exhorteth) 'come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,' (or, for seasonable relief: εἰς εὔκαιρον βοήθειαν.)

And beside those outwardly prompting and urging us, there be other opportunities springing from within us, which we are no less obliged and concerned to embrace. When God by his gentle whispers calleth us, or by his soft impulses draweth us into his presence; we should then take heed of stopping our ears, or turning our hearts from him, refusing to hearken or to comply. We must not any wise quench or damp any sparks of devout affection kindled in us by the divine Spirit; we must not repel or resist any of his kindly suggestions or motions.

Whenever we find ourselves well affected to, or well framed for devotion; that we have a lively sense of, and a coming appetite to spiritual things; that our spirits are brisk and pure, our fancy calm and clear, our hearts tender and supple, our affections warm and nimble; then a fair season offereth itself; and when the iron is so hot, we should strike.

If at any time we feel any forward inclinations or good dispositions to the practice of this duty, we should never check or curb them, but rather should promote and advance them; pushing ourselves forward in this hopeful career; letting out the stream of our affections into this right channel, that it may run freely therein, that it may overflow and diffuse itself in exuberance of devotion. Farther,

IV. 'Praying incessantly' may signify that we should with assiduous urgency drive on the intent of our prayers, never quitting it or desisting till our requests are granted, or our desires are accomplished. Thus doing we may be said to pray continually: as he that goeth forward in his journey, (although he sometime doth bait, sometime doth rest and repose himself,) is said yet to be in travel; or as he that doth not wave the prosecution of his cause, (although some demurs intervene,) is deemed still to be in suit. This is that which our Lord did in the gospel prescribe and persuade, where it is recorded of

him, that 'he spake a parable unto them, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.' That 'praying always' the ensuing discourse showeth to import restless importunity, and perseverance in prayer: the same which so often is commended to us by the phrases of μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, 'not to faint' or 'faulter;' μὴ παύεσθαι, 'not to cease,' or give over; προσκαρτερεῖν, 'to continue instant,' or hold out stoutly; ἀγωνίζεσθαι, 'to strive earnestly,' or contest and struggle in prayers; προσμένειν ταῖς δεήσεσι, 'to abide at supplications;' ἀγρυπνεῖν ἐν πάσῃ προσκαρτερήσει, 'to watch with all perseverance.' That which also is implied by those terms, which in scriptural style do commonly express devotion: by 'seeking God;' which implieth that God doth not presently, on any slight address, discover himself in beneficial effects answerable to our desires, but after a careful and painful continuance in our applications to him: by 'waiting on God;' which signifieth that if God do not presently appear, granting our requests, we should patiently stay, expecting till he be pleased to do it in his own best time, according to that in the Psalm, 'Our eyes wait on the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us:' by 'knocking;' which intimateth that the door of grace doth not ever stand open, or that we can have an effectual access to God, until he, warned, and as it were excited, by our earnest importunity, pleaseth to listen, to disclose himself, to come forth unto us.

And this practice reason also doth enforce. For there are some good things absolutely necessary for our spiritual life and welfare, (such as are freedom from bad inclinations, disorderly affections, vicious habits, and noxious errors; the sanctifying presence and influence of God's holy Spirit, with the blessed graces and sweet fruits thereof; growth in virtue, delight in spiritual things, the sense of God's love and favor, with the like,) which good reason engageth us perseveringly to seek, as never to rest or be satisfied till we have acquired them in perfect degree; since we cannot ever do well without them, or ever get enough of them. In begging other inferior things, it may become us to be reserved, indifferent, and modest; but about these matters (wherein all our felicity is extremely concerned) it were a folly to be slack or timorous; as we cannot be said immoderately to desire them, so we cannot be supposed

immodestly to seek them there, where only they can be found, in God's presence and hand. The case doth bear, yea, doth require that we should be eager and hot, resolute and stiff, free and bold, yea, in a manner peremptory and impudent solicitors with God for them. So our Saviour intimateth, where, comparing the manner of God's proceeding with that of men, he representeth one friend yielding needful succour to another, not barely on the score of friendship, but διὰ τὴν ἀναίδειαν, 'for his impudence;' that is, for his confident and continued urgency, admitting no refusal or excuse. So doth God, in such cases, allow and oblige us to deal with him, being instant and pertinacious in our requests, 'giving him no rest,' (as the phrase is in the prophet;) not enduring to be put off, or brooking any repulse; never being discouraged, or cast into despair, by any delay or semblance of neglect. We may 'wrestle with God,' like Jacob, and with Jacob may say, 'I will not let thee go except thou bless me.' Thus God sufferеth himself to be prevailed on, and is willingly overcome: thus Omnipotence may be mastered, and a happy victory may be gained over Invincibility itself. Heaven sometime may be forced by storm, (or by the assaults of extremely fervent prayer;) it assuredly will yield to a long siege. God will not ever hold out against the attempts of an obstinate suppliant. 'So the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' We read in St. John's gospel of a man, that, being thirty-eight years diseased, did wait at the pool of Bethesda seeking relief: him our Lord pitied and helped, crowning his patience with miraculous relief, and proposing it for an example to us of perseverance. It is said of the patriarch Isaac, that 'he intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebecca his wife conceived.' Whereon St. Chrysostom doth observe that he had persevered twenty years in that petition.

Of good success to this practice we have many assurances in holy Scripture. 'The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.' 'Blessed are all they that wait for him.' 'None that wait on him shall be ashamed.' 'They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall

mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.' So hath God assured by his word, and engaged himself by promise, that he will yield unto constant and patient devotion; so that it shall never want good success.

Without this practice we cannot indeed hope to obtain those precious things; they will not come at an easy rate, or be given for a song; a lazy wish or two cannot fetch them down from heaven. God will not bestow them at first asking, or deal them out in one lump; but it is on assiduous soliciting, and by gradual communication, that he dispenseth them. So his wise good will, for many special reasons, disposeth him to proceed: that we may (as it becometh and behoveth us) abide under a continual sense of our natural impotency and penury; of our dependence on God, and obligation to him for the free collation of those best gifts; that by some difficulty of procuring them we may be minded of their worth, and induced the more to prize them; that by earnestly seeking them we may improve our spiritual appetites, and excite holy affections; that by much conversing with heaven our minds may be raised above earthly things, and our hearts purified from sordid desires; that we may have a constant employment answerable to the best capacities of our souls, worthy our care and pain, yielding most solid profit and pure delight unto us; that in fine, by our greater endeavor in religious practice, we may obtain a more ample reward thereof.

For the same reason indeed that we pray at all, we should pray thus with continued instance. We do not pray to instruct or advise God; not to tell him news, or inform him of our wants: ('he knows them,' as our Saviour telleth us, 'before we ask;') nor do we pray by dint of argument to persuade God, and bring him to our bent; nor that by fair speech we may cajole him or move his affections toward us by pathetical orations: not for any such purpose are we obliged to pray. But for that it becometh and behoveth us so to do, because it is a proper instrument of bettering, ennobling, and perfecting our souls; because it breedeth most holy affections, and pure satisfactions, and worthy resolutions; because it fitteth us for the enjoyment of happiness, and leadeth us thither; for such ends

devotion is prescribed; and constant perseverance therein being needful to those purposes, (praying by fits and starts not sufficing to accomplish them,) therefore such perseverance is required of us. Farther,

V. 'Praying incessantly' may import that we do with all our occupations and all occurrences interlace devout ejaculations of prayer and praise; lifting up our hearts to God, and breathing forth expressions of devotion, suitable to the objects and occasions which present themselves. This, as it nearly doth approach to the punctual accomplishment of what our text prescribeth, so it seemeth required by St. Paul, when he biddeth us 'pray always' ἐν πνεύματι 'in spirit,' and to sing ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, 'in the heart;' that is, with very frequent elevations of spirit in holy thoughts and desires toward heaven; with opportune resentments of heart, directing thanks and praise to God. We cannot ever be framing or venting long prayers with our lips, but almost ever our mind can throw pious glances, our heart may dart good wishes upwards; so that hardly any moment (any considerable space of time) shall pass without some lightsome flashes of devotion.* As bodily respiration, without intermission or impediment, doth concur with all our actions, so may that breathing of soul, which preserveth our spiritual life, and ventilateth that holy flame within us, well conspire with all other occupations.† For devotion is of a nature so spiritual, so subtile, and penetrant, that no matter can exclude or obstruct it. Our minds are so exceedingly nimble and active, that no business can hold pace with them, or exhaust their attention and activity. We can never be so fully possessed by any employment, but that divers vacuities of time do intercur, wherein our thoughts and affections will be diverted to other matters. As a covetous man, whatever beside he is doing, will be carking about his bags and trea-

* Sed non satis perspiciunt quantum natura humani ingenii valeat, quæ ita est agilis et velox, sic in omnem partem (ut ita dixerim) spectat, ut ne possit quidem aliquid agere tantum unum; in plura vero non eodem die modo, sed eodem temporis momento, vim suam impendat.—Quint. i. 12.

† Μνημονευτέον γὰρ Θεοῦ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀναπνευστέον· καὶ εἰ οἷόν τε τοῦτο εἰπεῖν, μηδὲ ἄλλο τι ἢ τοῦτο πρακτέον.—Naz. Or. 33.

sures; an ambitious man will be devising on his plots and projects; a voluptuous man will have his mind in his dishes; a lascivious man will be doting on his amours; a studious man will be musing on his notions; every man, according to his particular inclination, will lard his business and besprinkle all his actions with cares and wishes tending to the enjoyment of what he most esteemeth and affecteth: so may a good Christian, through all his undertakings, wind in devout reflexions and pious motions of soul toward the chief object of his mind and affection. Most businesses have wide gaps, all have some chinks, at which devotion may slip in. Be we never so urgently set or closely intent on any work, (be we feeding, be we travelling, be we trading, be we studying,) nothing yet can forbid but that we may together wedge in a thought concerning God's goodness, and bolt forth a word of praise for it; but that we may reflect on our sins, and spend a penitential sigh on them; but that we may descry our need of God's help, and dispatch a brief petition for it: a 'God be praised,' a 'Lord have mercy,' a 'God bless,' or 'God help me,' will nowise interrupt or disturb our proceedings.* As worldly cares and desires do often intrude and creep into our devotions, distracting and defiling them; so may spiritual thoughts and holy affections insinuate themselves into, and hallow our secular transactions. This practice is very possible, and it is no less expedient; for that if our employments be not thus seasoned, they can have no true life or savor in them; they will in themselves be dead and putrid, they will be foul and noisome, or at least flat and insipid unto us.

There are some other good meanings of this precept, according to which holy Scripture (backed with good reason) obligeth us to observe it: but those, (together with the general inducements to the practice of this duty,) that I may not farther now trespass on your patience, I shall reserve to another opportunity.

* Εἰπὲ κατὰ διάνοιαν, Ἐλέησόν με, ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ ἀπήρτισταί σου ἡ εὐχή.—Chrys. Orat. v. in Annam, v. p. 78, 79.

SUMMARY OF SERMON VII.

1 THESSALONIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 17.

WHAT the prayer here enjoined by St. Paul imports, and how, according to different senses, we may perform this duty incessantly, has been declared in the preceding discourse: two or three more are now added and pressed on our observation.

VI. Praying incessantly may imply that we appoint certain times conveniently distant for the practice of devotion, and carefully observe them: as the Jews had a sacrifice called *Tamidh*, which being constantly offered at set times, was thence denominated *the continual sacrifice;* so may we, by punctually observing fit returns of devotion, be said to pray incessantly. Reasons given why we should do this. In determining these seasons according to just proportions, honest prudence must arbitrate. It is shown how that nature herself seems to prescribe and define certain seasons and periods of this kind. These times it is necessary or expedient that persons of the highest rank and greatest employment should observe. God himself appointed such in his law, or by his prophets; besides which, there were other middle times farther observed by devout people who had leisure and disposition of mind thereto: references to such in the holy Scripture. And if the Jews were so liberal in appointing times for yielding praise and offering supplications to God, how much more ready and diligent should we be, who have a religion far more spiritual and exempt from corporeal incumbrances? But,

VII. This precept may be more especially supposed to exact from us a compliance in carefully observing the times of devotion ordained by public authority, or settled by general custom. This in a popular and legal sense is doing a thing indesinently, when we perform it so often as is required by law or custom: illustrations from Scripture. Motives for our observing these legal times, given from reason, and enforced by Scripture.

VIII. Lastly, praying incessantly may import at large a frequency in devotion. This the words at least do exact or necessarily imply, however expounded: for doing a thing incessantly cannot imply less than doing it frequently; but it is an ordinary figure of speech to say, a man does that always which he is wont to do and performs often: this illustrated from Scripture. It is shown that the causes of devotion being so constant, the effects in some correspondence should be frequent.

Such frequency necessary for the nourishment, growth, and improvement of all piety; to keep us steady in our obedience; to correct our perverse inclinations, and subdue our vicious appetites; to maintain that friendship with God, which is the soul of piety. It is the frequency of devotion which alone can secure any practice thereof, at least any duly qualified. It is this which will render the way into God's presence smooth and passable, removing all fear and doubt in respect to God, which might deter or discourage us from approaching him: this illustrated by quotations from holy Scripture.

From thus praying continually there can be no good exception or just excuse. The most common pleas alleged for the omission are two; one drawn from external avocations, the other from internal indispositions obstructing it; both of which rather serve to aggravate than to excuse the neglect.

I. The first plea or apology refuted by a few questions asked concerning it. 1. Do we take devotion itself to be no business, or a business of no consideration? 2. What other affairs can we have of greater moment or necessity? 3. If we survey and prize all worldly affairs, which among them will appear so importunate as to demand, or so worthy as to deserve all our time, that we cannot spare a few moments for intercourse with heaven? 4. Should we not, if we honestly made the comparison, easily discern that it is no indispensable business, but rather some base dotage on lucre, some inveigling pleasure, that crosses our devotion? 5. Is it not commonly sloth rather than activity that diverts us from our prayers? 6. But even if there were, not a counterfeit, but a real competition between devotion and other lawful business, which in reason ought to carry it? which in conscience ought to be forborne or suspended? 7. Is it not strangely absurd and unhandsome to say, I cannot wait on God, because I must speak with a friend; I cannot go to church, though God calls me thither, because I must haste to market, &c.? 8. Moreover if we reflect on the large portions of time which we squander on our petty matters or voluptuous enjoyments, how can we satisfy ourselves in not allotting competent time for God's service, and our own salvation? 9. Again, is it not great imprudence so to lay our business, that any other matter shall thwart or thrust out devotion? 10. In truth, will not an attendance on devotion be a great furtherance to all other good business? This point enlarged on: instances given of David, Daniel, and Constantine.

II. No better can a man ward off blame from himself, by imputing the neglect of devotion to some indisposition from within. This is only to cover one fault with another; is in effect to say, we may sin because we have a mind to it: our indisposition itself is criminal, and the more so from its being

somewhat habitual: it ought therefore to be corrected and cured by an immediate practice of the duty, and by resolute perseverance in it. Prayer by degrees will become natural and delightful to us.

SERMON VII.

OF THE DUTY OF PRAYER.

I THESSALONIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 17.

Pray without ceasing.

WHAT the prayer here enjoined by St. Paul doth import, and how by it universally all sorts of devotion should be understood, we did formerly discourse. How also according to divers senses (grounded in holy Scripture, and enforced by good reason) we may perform this duty incessantly, we did then declare; five such senses we did mention and prosecute: I shall now add two or three more, and press them.

VI. Praying then incessantly may imply that we do appoint certain times conveniently distant for the practice of devotion, and carefully observe them. To keep the Jews in a constant exercise of divine worship, God did constitute a sacrifice, which was called *Tamidh*, (ἡ διαπαντὸς θυσία) the continual sacrifice. And as that sacrifice, being constantly offered at set times, was thence denominated continual; so may we, by punctually observing fit returns of devotion, be said to pray incessantly.

And great reason there is that we should do so. For we know that all persons, who would not lead a loose and slattering life, but design with good assurance and advantage to prosecute an orderly course of action, are wont to distribute their time into several parcels; assigning some part thereof to the necessary refection of their bodies, some to the convenient relaxation of their minds, some to the dispatch of their ordinary affairs, some also to familiar conversation and interchanging

good offices with their friends;* considering that otherwise they shall be uncertain and 'unstable in all their ways.' And in this distribution of time devotion surely should not lack its share: it rather justly claimeth the choicest portion to be allotted thereto, as being incomparably the noblest part of our duty, and mainest concernment of our lives. The feeding our souls and nourishing our spiritual life, the refreshing our spirits with those no less pleasant than wholesome exercises, the driving on our correspondence and commerce with heaven, the improving our friendship and interest with God, are affairs which above all others do best deserve and most need being secured. They must not therefore be left at random, to be done by the by, as it hitteth by chance, or as the fancy taketh us. If we do not depute vacant seasons, and fix periodical returns for devotion, engaging ourselves by firm resolution, and inuring our minds by constant usage to the strict observance of them, secluding from them, as from sacred inclosures, all other businesses; we shall often be dangerously tempted to neglect it, we shall be commonly listless to it, prone to defer it, easily seduced from it by the encroachment of other affairs, or enticement of other pleasures. It is requisite that our souls also (no less than our bodies) should have their meals, settled at such intervals as the maintenance of their life, their health, their strength and vigor do require; that they may not perish or languish for want of timely repasts; that a good appetite may duly spring up, prompting and instigating to them; that a sound temper and robust constitution of soul may be preserved by them.

Prayers are the bulwarks of piety and good conscience, the which ought to be placed so as to flank and relieve one another, together with the interjacent spaces of our life; that the enemy ('the sin which doth so easily beset us') may not come on between, or at any time assault us, without a force sufficiently near to reach and repel him.

In determining these seasons and measures of time according to just proportion, honest prudence (weighing the several con-

* Cur ipsi aliquid forensibus negotiis, aliquid desideriis amicorum, aliquid rationibus domesticis, aliquid curæ corporis, nonnihil voluptati quotidie damus?—Quint. i. 12.

ditions, capacities, and circumstances of each person) must arbitrate. For some difference is to be made between a merchant and a monk, between those who follow a court, and those who reside in a cloister or a college. Some men having great incumbrances of business and duty by necessity imposed on them, which consume much of their time, and engage their thoughts; of them in reason, neither so frequent recourses to, nor so long continuance in prayer can be demanded, as from those who enjoy more abundant leisure, and freer scope of thoughts. But some fit times all may and must allow, which no avocation of business, no distraction of care should purloin from them.

Certain seasons and periods of this kind nature itself (in correspondence to her unalterable revolutions) doth seem to define and prescribe: those which the royal prophet recommendeth, when he saith, 'It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O thou most high:' 'To show forth thy loving-kindness every morning, and thy faithfulness every night.' Every day we do recover and receive a new life from God; every morning we do commence business, or revive it; from our bed of rest and security we then issue forth, exposing ourselves to the cares and toils, to the dangers, troubles, and temptations of the world: then especially therefore it is reasonable that we should sacrifice thanks to the gracious preserver of our life, and the faithful restorer of its supports and comforts; that we should crave his direction and help in the pursuit of our honest undertakings; that to his protection from sin and mischief we should recommend ourselves and our affairs; that, by offering up to him the first-fruits of our diurnal labors, we should consecrate and consign them all to his blessing; that as we are then wont to salute all the world, so then chiefly with humble obeisance we should accost him, who is ever present with us, and continually watchful over us. Then also peculiarly devotion is most seasonable, because then our minds being less prepossessed and pestered with other cares, our fancies becoming lively and gay, our memories fresh and prompt, our spirits copious and brisk, we are better disposed for it.

Every night also reason calleth for these duties; requiring that we should close our business and wind up all our cares in

devotion; that we should then bless God for his gracious preservation of us from the manifold hazards and the sins to which we stood obnoxious; that we should implore his mercy for the manifold neglects and transgressions of our duty, which through the day past we have incurred; that our minds being then so tired with study and care, our spirits so wasted with labor and toil, that we cannot any longer sustain ourselves, but do of our own accord sink down into a posture of death, we should, as dying men, resign our souls into God's hand, depositing ourselves and our concernments into his custody, who alone 'doth never sleep nor slumber;' praying that he would guard us from all the dangers and disturbances incident to us in that state of forgetfulness, and *interregnum* of our reason; that he would grant us a happy resurrection in safety and health, with a good and cheerful mind, enabling us thereafter comfortably to enjoy ourselves, and delightfully to serve him.

Thus if we do constantly bound and circumscribe our days, dedicating those most remarkable breaks of time unto God's service, since beginning and end do comprehend the whole, seeing, in the computation and style of Moses, 'evening and morning' do constitute a day: we may with some good congruity be said to pray incessantly.

Especially if at the middle distance between those extremes we are wont to interpose somewhat of devotion. For as then usually our spirits, being somewhat shattered and spent, do need a recruit, enabling us to pass through the residue of the day with its incumbent business; so then it would do well, and may be requisite, in a meal of devotion to refresh our souls with spiritual sustenance, drawn from the never-failing storehouse of divine grace; which may so fortify us, that with due vigor and alacrity we may perform the ensuing duties to God's honor and our own comfort. Thus to practise was the resolution of the psalmist, that great master of devotion: 'evening,' said he, 'and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud.' And this was the custom of the noble Daniel, from which no occasion could divert, no hazard could deter him; 'he kneeled,' saith the story, 'on his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.'

These are times which it is necessary or very expedient that all men (even persons of highest rank and greatest employment) should observe. These even of old were the practices of religious persons, not expressly prescribed by God's law, but assumed by themselves; good reason suggesting them to the first practisers, and the consenting example of pious men afterward inforcing them.

God indeed did himself in his law, or by his prophets, appoint public and solemn celebrations of worship to himself, in sacrifices (involving prayer and accompanied therewith) constantly to be offered every morning and evening: religious princes also did institute services of thanksgiving and praise to be performed at those times: but there doth not appear any direct institution of private devotion, or its circumstances; but the practice thereof seemeth originally to have been purely voluntary, managed and measured according to the reason, by the choice of each person; yet so that the practice of eminently good men leading, and others following, it grew into a kind of common law, or standing rule, (seeming to carry an obligation with it,) to observe the times specified.

Besides those three times, there were farther other middle times observed by devout people, who had leisure and disposition of mind thereto; once between morning and noon, and once between noon and evening were sequestered to that purpose: whence in the Acts the ninth hour of the day (that is, the middle interval between noon and evening) is called 'the hour of prayer.' Yea, some did impose on themselves the observation of two other times, one between evening and midnight, the other between midnight and morn. To which practice those places in the Psalms do seem to allude: 'My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.' 'I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried; mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I may meditate on thy word.' And plainly the whole number of those times which the psalmist observed, is expressed in those words: 'seven times a day will I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.' Which examples whoever shall choose to follow, (in any measure,) he shall do wisely and commendably; he shall certainly have no cause to repent;

he will find it richly worth his while; great benefit and comfort will thence accrue unto him.

If indeed Jews were so liberal in assigning, so punctual in affording such portions of time for yielding praise, and offering supplications unto God; how much more free and ready, more careful and diligent, should we be in this way of practice? we who have a religion so far more spiritual, and exempt from corporeal incumbrances; precepts so much more express and clear; so much higher obligations and stronger encouragements to this duty; whom God in especial manner so graciously doth invite, so powerfully doth attract unto himself? But farther,

VII. More especially this precept may be supposed to exact from us a compliance in carefully observing the times of devotion ordained by public authority, or settled by general custom. This in a popular and legal sense is doing a thing indesinently, when we perform it so often as is required by law or custom. So the Apostle to the Hebrews saith of the priests, that 'they went always into the tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God:' *always*, that is, at all the solemn times appointed. And thus of the Apostles it is affirmed by St. Luke, that 'they were continually in the temple, blessing and praising God;' that is, they constantly resorted thither at the stated times of concourse for prayer. This good reason also plainly doth injoin: for that the neglecting it is not only a disorderly behavior in a matter of high consequence; a criminal disregard and disobedience to authority; a scandalous contempt of our neighbors, from whose laudable fashion we discost; a wrongful deserting the public, to whose good, mainly promoted by the public worship of God, we do owe the contribution of our endeavor; but a heinous affront to Almighty God, who thereby is plainly dishonored, and in a manner openly disavowed; a huge prejudice to religion, the credit and power whereof, without visible profession, exemplary compliance, mutual consent and encouragement, cannot be upheld. Were there times by law or custom defined, (as in some places indeed there are,) when all men should be required in person solemnly to attend on their prince, for professing their allegiance, or deferring any homage to him; would not those who

should wilfully refuse or decline appearance, be justly chargeable as guilty of dishonoring and wronging him? would not their such defailance pass for sufficient proof that they do not acknowlege him, that at least they do not much regard or value him? So, by not joining at stated times in celebration of divine worship, we may be well conceived wholly to disclaim God, or greatly to disesteem him; to slight religion, as a thing insignificant and unprofitable. Do we not indeed thereby more than intimate that we little believe God to be our sovereign Lord and Governor; that we stand in no great awe or dread of him; that we are not much sensible of his benefits and mercies; that we repose small trust or hope in him; that we do not take ourselves much to want his protection, his guidance, his assistance, his favor and mercy? Are we not in effect like to those in Job, who 'say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowlege of thy ways? What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? or what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?' Thus the standers-by commonly (some so as to be much offended at, others so as to be corrupted by our bad example) will interpret this neglect; and so assuredly God himself will take it from us, and accordingly deal with us. As he claimeth this public attendance on him for his due: ('give,' proclaimeth he by the mouth of one of his great heralds, 'give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength:' 'give unto the Lord the glory due to his name: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:') so if we to his wrong and disgrace refuse to yield it, we shall certainly find answerable resentment and recompense from him: that as we are careless to serve him, so he will be unmindful to bless us; as we are backward to avow and glorify him, so he will not be forward to own and grace us; as we do so 'deny him before men,' so 'he will deny us before them also.' What other measure indeed can we imagine or expect to receive? Will God, think we, be so partial and fond of us, so disregardful and injurious toward himself, that he will vouchsafe to appear in favor to us, when we deign not to appear in respect to him? that he will openly tender our repute, when we apparently disregard his honor? that he will employ his wisdom, or exert his power in our behalf, when we scarce will think a thought, or stir a step, for his service? Can

we hope that he will freely dispense prosperous success to our enterprises, when we either care not or scorn to implore his help? that he will reach forth undeserved blessings to us, when we subtract due praises from him? that he will anywise show himself bountiful and merciful toward us, when we so palpably are unjust and ingrateful toward him? No, 'surely he scorneth the scorners;' and 'whosoever despiseth him shall be lightly esteemed:' so he expressly hath threatened; and seeing he is both infallibly true and invincibly able, we may reasonably presume that he will accomplish his word.

VIII. Lastly, 'praying incessantly' may import at large a frequency in devotion. This the words at least do exact or necessarily imply, however expounded. For doing incessantly cannot imply less than doing frequently: in no tolerable sense can we be said to do that continually which we do seldom: but it is an ordinary scheme of speech to say that a man doth that always, which he is wont to do, and performeth often. As of the pious soldier Cornelius it is said, that he 'gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always;' and of Anna the prophetess, that she 'departed not from the temple, but served God with prayers and fastings night and day;' that is, she frequently resorted to the temple, and served God with an assiduous constancy. As the words may bear and do involve this sense, so doth the reason of the case enforce it: for very just, very fit, very needful it is to practise thus. There is ever at hand abundant reason for, and apposite matter of, devotion; therefore no large space of time should pass without it: there be perpetually depending many causes thereof; whence there is not to be allowed any long vacation from it. As every moment we from God's mercy and bounty partake great favors; so should we often render thanks and praise for them: for perpetually to receive courtesies, and rarely to return acknowlegements, is notorious ingratitude and iniquity. We frequently (and in a manner continually) do fall into sins; often therefore we are obliged to confess sins, we are concerned to deprecate wrath and beg mercy; otherwise we must long crouch under the sore burden of guilt, the sad dread of punishment, the bitter pangs of remorse, or the desperate hazard of stupid obduration. Whatever we design or undertake, to-

ward the good management and happy success thereof, we (being ignorant and impotent creatures) do need the guidance, the assistance, and the blessing of God; so often therefore it is requisite that we should be seeking and suing for them: if not, we do not only transgress our duties, but fondly neglect or foully betray our own concernments. The causes therefore of devotion being so constant, the effects in some correspondence should be frequent.

Such frequency is indeed necessary for the breeding, the nourishment, the growth and improvement of all piety. Devotion is that holy and heavenly fire, which darteth into our minds the light of spiritual knowlege, which kindleth in our hearts the warmth of holy desires: if therefore we do continue long absent from it, a night of darkness will overspread our minds, a deadening coldness will seize on our affections. It is the best food of our souls which preserveth their life and health, which repaireth their strength and vigor, which rendereth them lusty and active: if we therefore long abstain from it, we shall starve or pine away; we shall be faint and feeble in all religious performances; we shall have none at all, or a very languid and meagre piety.

To maintain in us a constant and steady disposition to obedience, to correct our perverse inclinations, to curb our unruly passions, to strengthen us against temptations, to comfort us in anxieties and distresses, we do need continual supplies of grace from God; the which ordinarily are communicated in devotion, as the channel which conveyeth, or the instrument which helpeth to procure it, or the condition on which it is granted. Faith, hope, love, spiritual comfort, and joy, all divine graces are chiefly elicited, expressed, exercised therein and thereby: it is therefore needful that it should frequently be used; seeing otherwise we shall be in danger to fail in discharging our chief duties, and to want the best graces.

It is frequency of devotion also which maintaineth that friendship with God which is the soul of piety. As familiar conversation (wherein men do express their minds and affections mutually) breedeth acquaintance, and cherisheth good-will of men to one another; but long forbearance thereof dissolveth or slackeneth the bonds of amity, breaking their intimacy, and

cooling their kindness: so is it in respect to God; it is frequent converse with him which begetteth a particular acquaintance with him, a mindful regard of him, a hearty liking to him, a delightful taste of his goodness, and consequently a sincere and solid good-will toward him; but intermission thereof produceth estrangement or enmity toward him, If we seldom come at God, we shall little know him, not much care for him, scarce remember him, rest insensible of his love, and regardless of his favor; a coldness, a shyness, a distaste, an antipathy toward him will by degrees creep on us. Abstinence from his company and presence will cast us into conversations destructive or prejudicial to our friendship with him; wherein soon we shall contract familiarity and friendship with his enemies, (the world and the flesh,) which are inconsistent with love to him, which will dispose us to forget him, or to dislike and loathe him.

It is, in fine, the frequency of devotion which alone can secure any practice thereof, at least any practice thereof duly qualified; so hearty, so easy, so sweet and delightful as it should be. We have all a natural averseness or indisposition thereto, as requiring an abstraction of thoughts and affections from sensible things, and a fastening them on objects purely spiritual; a rearing our heavy spirits above their common pitch; a staying and settling our roving fancies; a composing our vain hearts in a sober and steady frame, agreeable to devotion: to effect which things is a matter of no small difficulty and pain; which therefore, without much use and exercise, cannot be accomplished, but with it may; so that by frequent practice, the bent of our heart being turned, the strangeness of the thing ceasing, the difficulty of the work being surmounted, we shall obtain a good propension to the duty, and a great satisfaction therein.

This will render the way into God's presence smooth and passable; removing, as all other obstacles, so particularly those of fear and doubt in respect to God, which may deter or discourage us from approaching to him. God being most holy and pure, most great and glorious, we, sensible of our corruption and vileness, may be fearful and shy of coming near unto him. But when coming into his presence we do find that 'such as his majesty is, such is his mercy;' when we do 'taste and see

that the Lord is good;' when by experience we feel that 'in his presence there is fulness of joy;' being 'abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house;' having our souls there 'satisfied as with marrow and fatness;' finding that 'a day in his courts is better than a thousand' spent otherwhere; perceiving that he biddeth us welcome, that he treateth us kindly, that he sendeth us away refreshed with sweetest comforts, and rewarded with most excellent benefits; this will not only reconcile our hearts to devotion, but draw us into a cordial liking and earnest desire thereof; such as the psalmist expresseth, when he saith, 'My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.' This will engage us into strong resolutions of constantly practising it; such as the same holy person again declareth in these words; 'I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications: because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call on him as long as I live.' Hence, instead of a suspicious estrangedness, a servile dread, or an hostile disaffection toward God, there will spring up an humble confidence, a kindly reverence, a hearty love toward him; which will on all occasions drive us to him, hoping for his friendly succor, longing after his kind embraces. So will the frequency of devotion render it facile and pleasant. Whereas, on the contrary, disuse thereof will make it at any time hard and irksome; strengthening and increasing our natural averseness thereto: performing it seldom, we shall never perform it well, with that attention, that affection, that promptitude, that willingness and alacrity, which are due thereto.

According to so many senses, in so many respects, may we, and should we observe this precept. From thus praying continually there can be no good exception or just excuse. The most common pleas that will be alleged for the omission thereof are two; one drawn from external avocations, the other from internal indispositions obstructing it: both of which are so far from being good, that being scanned, they will soon appear serving rather to aggravate than to excuse or abate the neglect.

I. I cannot, saith one, now attend to prayers, because I am not at liberty, or at leisure, being urgently called away, and

otherwise engaged by important affairs. How much a flam this apology is we shall presently descry, by asking a few questions about it.

1. Do we take devotion itself to be no business, or a business of no consideration? Do we conceit, when we pay God his debts, or discharge our duties toward him, when we crave his aid or mercy, when we solicit the main concernments of our soul, (yea, of our body also and its estate,) that we are idle or misemployed; that we lavish our time, or lose our pains?

2. What other affairs can we have of greater moment or necessity than this? Can there be any obligation more indispensable than is that of yielding due respect and service to our Maker, our great Patron, our most liberal Benefactor? Can there be any interest more close or weighty than this, of providing for our souls' eternal health and happiness? Is not this indeed the great work, 'the only necessary matter,' in comparison whereto all other occupations are mere trifling, or unprofitable fiddling about nothing? What will all other business signify, what will come of it, if this be neglected? Busy we may be, we may plod, we may drudge eternally; but all to no end. All our care is in effect improvidence, all our industry may be well reckoned idleness, if God be not served, if our souls are not secured.

3. If we survey and prize all worldly businesses, which among them will appear so importunate as to demand, so greedy as to devour, so worthy at least as to deserve all our time, that we cannot spare a few minutes for maintaining our most pleasant intercourse, and most gainful commerce with heaven? What are the great businesses of the world? what but scraping and scrambling for pelf, contriving and compassing designs of ambition, courting the favor and respect of men, making provision for carnal pleasure, gratifying fond curiosity or vain humor? And do any of these deserve to be put into the scale against, shall all of them together be able to sway down our spiritual employments? Shall these images, these shadows of business, supplant or crowd our devotion; that which procureth wealth inestimably precious, pleasure infinitely satisfactory, honor incomparably noble above all this world can afford? If the expense of time be, as the philo-

sopher Theophrastus said, πολυτελέστατον ἀνάλωμα, 'the most precious expense' that can be; how can it better be laid out than on the worthiest things, such as devotion alone can afford the purchase and possession of? True virtue, sound wisdom, a quiet conscience, and steady tranquillity of mind, the love and favor of God, a title unto endless joy and bliss, are purely the gifts of Heaven; and thence they will not descend of themselves, but prayer must fetch them down. If nothing then in the world be comparable to those things, how can any time be so well spent as in prayer, which acquireth them; which also best secureth whatever we have, and is the readiest way to procure whatever we want?

4. Should we not farther, honestly comparing things, easily discern that it is no such indispensable business, but rather indeed some base dotage on lucre, some inveigling bait of pleasure, some bewitching transport of fancy, that crosseth our devotion? Is it not often a complimental visit, an appointment to tattle or to tipple, a match for sport, a wild ramble in vice or folly, that so deeply engageth us to put off our duty?

5. Yea, is it not commonly sloth rather than activity, an averseness from this, rather than an inclination to any other employment, which diverteth us from our prayers? Is not, I say, the true reason why we pray so seldom, not because we are very busy, but because we are extremely idle; so idle, that we cannot willingly take the pains to unscrew our affections from sensible things, to reduce our wandering thoughts, to compose our hearts into a right frame, to bend our untoward inclinations to a compliance with our duty? Is it not because we do not feel that favor and satisfaction in these, which we do in other trivial and worthless employments, nor will be at the trouble to work such dispositions in our souls? Do we not betake ourselves to other conversations and commerces merely for refuge, shunning this intercourse with God and with ourselves? These, I fear, are oftener the real causes of our neglecting devotion, than any such mighty avocations which we pretend.

6. But were there indeed not only a counterfeit or imaginary, but a real competition between devotion and other lawful business, which, in reason, should carry it? in conscience,

which of the two should be forborne or suspended? Is it not evidently better that the pursuit of our temporal interests, whatever they be, should be a little checked, than that our affairs of everlasting consequence should be quite laid aside? that we should venture a small impairing of our estate, than surely endamage our souls? that we hazard to disappoint or displease a man, than dare to affront and offend the Almighty God?

7. Were it not strangely absurd and unhandsome to say, I cannot wait on God, because I must speak with a friend; I cannot go to church, although God calleth me thither, because I must haste to market; I cannot stand to pray, because I am to receive money, or to make up a bargain; I cannot discharge my duty to God, because a greater obligation than that doth lie on me? How unconceivable an honor, how unvaluable a benefit is it, that the incomprehensibly great and glorious Majesty of heaven doth vouchsafe us the liberty to approach so near unto him, to converse so freely with him, to demand and derive from his hand the supply of all our needs, and satisfaction of all our reasonable desires? and is it then just or seemly, by such comparisons to disparage his favor, by such pretences to baffle with his goodness?

Put the case our prince should call for us to speak with him about matters nearly touching his service and our welfare; would it be according unto duty, discretion, or decency, to reply, that we are at present busy, and have no leisure, and must therefore hold ourselves excused; but that, if he will stay awhile, at another time, when we have less to do, we shall be perhaps disposed to wait on him? The case is propounded by our Lord in that parable, wherein God is represented as a great man, that had prepared a feast, and invited many guests thereto; but they excused themselves: 'One said, that he had purchased land, and must needs go out to see it: another had bought five yoke of oxen, and must go to prove them; another had married a wife, and therefore could not come.' These indeed were affairs considerable, as this world hath any; but yet the excuses did not satisfy; for, notwithstanding, the great person was angry, and took the neglect in huge disdain.

8. Moreover, if we reflect what vast portions of time we

squander away on our petty matters, on voluptuous enjoyments, on fruitless pastimes, on impertinent talk; how can we satisfy ourselves in not alloting competent time for God's service, our own salvation, and the future everlasting state? Doth not he, who, with the continuance of our life, bestoweth on us all our time, deserve that a pittance of it should be reserved for himself? Can all the world duly claim so great an allowance thereof? May not our soul (which is far our noblest part, which indeed is all ourselves) justly challenge a good share of our time to be expended on it? or shall this mortal husk engross it all? Must eternity, which comprehendeth all time, have no time belonging to it, or allotted for its concernments?

9. Again, is it not great imprudence so to lay our business, that any other matter shall thwart or thrust out devotion? Easily with a little providence may things be so ordered, that it, without interfering or justling, may well consist with all other both needful business, and convenient divertisement; so that it shall neither obstruct them, nor they extrude it; and are we not very culpable, if we do not use so much providence?*

10. In truth, attending on devotion can be no obstacle, but will be great furtherance to all other good business. It is the most sure, most pleasant, most advantageous and compendious way of transacting affairs, to mix prayers and praises with them; it is the best oil that can be, to make the wheels of action go on smoothly and speedily: it not only sanctifieth our undertakings, but much promoteth and exceedingly sweeteneth the management of them. For the conscience of having rendered unto God his due respect and service, of having intrusted our affairs to his care, of having consequently engaged his protection and assistance for us, will dispose us to do things with a courageous alacrity and comfortable satisfaction; will fill us with a good hope of prospering; will prepare us however to be satisfied with the event, whatever it shall be; will in effect

* Πρῶτον μὲν, αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἔγκλημα οὐ μικρὸν, τὸ κυκλοῦσθαι τοσούτων πραγμάτων πλήθει, καὶ τοῖς βιωτικοῖς οὕτω προσηλῶσθαι διὰ παντὸς, ὡς μηδὲ μικρὰν εἰς τὰ πάντων ἀναγκαιότερα ἄγειν σχολήν.—Chrys. in Joh. i. 14. (Or. 11.)

procure a blessing and happy success, such as we may truly rejoice and triumph in, as conferred by God in favor to us. Whereas neglecting these duties, we can have no solid content or savory complacence in any thing we undertake: reflecting on such misbehavior (if we be not downright infidels, or obdurate reprobates in impiety) will quash or damp our courage: having thence forfeited all pretence to God's succor, and provoked him to cross us, we must needs suspect disappointment: as we have no reasonable ground to hope for success; so we cannot, if success arriveth, be heartily satisfied therein, or take it for a blessing.

He therefore that is such a niggard of his time, that he grudgeth to withhold any part thereof from his worldly occasions, deeming all time cast away that is laid out in waiting on God, is really most unthrifty and prodigal thereof: by not sparing a little, he wasteth all his time to no purpose; by so eagerly pursuing, he effectually setteth back his designs; by preposterously affecting to dispatch his affairs, he rendereth them endless, or, which is the same, altogether unprofitable.

In fine, we may be sure that no time is spent even so prudently and politicly, with so great advantage and so real fruit to ourselves, as that which is employed on devotion. In sacrificing his time, his pains, his substance, any thing he hath or can do, to God's service, no man can be a loser.

We have also many examples plainly demonstrating the consistency of this practice with all other business. Who ever had more or greater affairs to manage, and who ever managed them with greater success, than David; on whom did lie the burden of a royal estate, and the care over a most populous nation; the which 'he fed with a faithful and true heart, and ruled prudently with all his power;' who waged great wars, vanquished mighty enemies, achieved many glorious exploits, underwent many grievous troubles? Yet could not such engagements distract or depress his mind from a constant attendance on devotion. 'I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be continually in my mouth.' 'My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day.' 'I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever.' So he declareth his resolution and his practice. Who is more pressingly employed

than was Daniel, first president over so vast a kingdom, chief minister of state to the greatest monarch on earth? Yet constantly 'thrice a day did he pray and give thanks unto his God.' Who can be more entangled in varieties and intricacies of care, or pains, of trouble, than was he that prescribeth unto us this rule of praying continually? On him did lie 'the care of all the churches; night and day with labour and toil did he work' for the sustenance of his life, 'that he might not' (to the disparagement of the gospel) burden any man;' perpetually he was engaged in all sorts of labor and travail, ever conflicting with perils, with wants, with inconveniences numberless; yet did he exactly conform his practice to his rule, being no less indefatigable and incessant in his devotion than he was in his business. Who ever managed a greater empire than Constantine? Yet 'every day,' as Eusebius reporteth, 'at stated times, shutting himself up, he alone privately did converse with his God.'* The most pious men indeed have never been idle or careless men, but always most busy and active, most industrious in their callings, most provident for their families, most officious toward their friends, most ready to serve their country, most abundant in all good works; yet have they always been most constant in devotion. So that experience clearly doth evidence, how reconcileable much devotion is to much business; and that consequently the prosecution of the one cannot well palliate the neglect of the other.

II. No better can any man ward himself from blame, by imputing the neglect of devotion to some indisposition within him thereto. For this is only to cover one fault with another, or to lay on a patch more ugly than the sore. It is, in effect, to say we may sin, because we have a mind to it, or care not to do otherwise. Our indisposition itself is criminal; and as signifying somewhat habitual or settled, is worse than a single omission; it ought therefore to be corrected and cured; and the way to do it is, by setting presently on the practice of the duty, and persisting resolutely therein; otherwise how is it possible that it should ever be removed? The longer we for-

* Καιροῖς ἑκάστης ἡμέρας τακτοῖς ἑαυτὸν ἐγκλείων, μόνος μόνῳ τῷ αὐτῷ προσωμίλει Θεῷ.—Euseb. de Vita Const. iv. 22.

bear it, the more seldom we perform it, the stronger surely will our indisposition grow, and the more difficult it will be to remove it. But if (with any degree of seriousness and good intention) we come indisposed to prayer, we may thereby be formed into better disposition, and by continual attendance thereon, we shall (God's grace co-operating, which never is wanting to serious and honest intentions) grow toward a perfect fitness for it: prayer by degrees will become natural and delightful to us.

SUMMARY OF SERMON VIII.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 20.

THE words of this text may be severed from the context, and considered distinctly by themselves. In them we find the substance of a duty to which we are exhorted: the object or term to which it is directed: the time of performance, and the adequate matter of the duty, or how far it should extend. These particulars are considered severally, and in order.

I. Concerning the duty itself, *to give thanks*, or rather *to be thankful*, as it involves a respect to benefits received, so in its employment about them it requires or supposes the following particulars.

1. It implies a right apprehension of, and consequently a considerate attention to, benefits conferred. The method prescribed by the psalmist, that great master of thanksgiving, is, first, experimental notice, then wise consideration, then grateful sense, then public acknowlegement: this topic enlarged on.

2. It requires a faithful retention of benefits in the memory, and consequently frequent reflexions on them; for he that is no longer affected by a benefit than it affects the senses, and suffers not itself to be disregarded, is very far from being grateful. Instance of ingratitude in this respect shown by the Jews: a contrary one by that great pattern of gratitude the royal prophet: this subject enlarged on.

3. This duty implies a due esteem and valuation of bene-

fits; that the nature and quality, the measure and quantity, the circumstances and consequences of them be well considered; else the gratitude is like to be none, or very defective. Excellent example of David in this respect. We ought diligently to survey and judiciously to estimate the effects of divine beneficence, like those who contemplate some rare beauty or some excellent picture; these commending the exact proportions, those the graceful features, others the lively colors discernible therein.

4. *Giving thanks* imports that benefits be received with willing mind, hearty sense, and vehement affection; a cheerful and cordial acceptance of them being, as it were, the life and spirit, the principal and most essential ingredient of the duty. Dictate of the Stoics on this point, though it went for a paradox, was not unreasonable: the topic enlarged on.

5. This duty farther requires due acknowlegement of our obligation, significations of our notice, declarations of our esteem, and good acceptance of favors conferred. The most detestable ingratitude is that which proceeds from pride and scorn; and such is he guilty of, who is unwilling or ashamed to confess himself obliged; who purposely dissembles a benefit, or disavows the benefactor. Surely the least homage we can pay to Almighty God, is to avow our dependence on him for the good things we enjoy, and to proclaim to the world our experience of his goodness. Example of the psalmist. If a grateful affection lives in our hearts, it will respire through our mouths. Gratitude is of a fruitful and diffusive nature, free and communicative; its best instrument therefore is speech: we may also consider that it has been the manner prompted by nature, and authorised by general practice, by men of all nations and all times, to express their gratitude for the gifts of Providence by composed hymns and panegyrical eulogies.

6. Moreover, this duty requires endeavors after real compensation, and a satisfactory requital of benefits, according to the ability and opportunity of the receiver. It is true our *righteousness* (or *beneficence*) *doth not extend unto God:* his benefits exceed all possibility of a proportionable requital. We cannot enrich him with our gifts, nor advance him by our commendations; but we may by apposite significations declare our willingness to serve him; by our demeanour we may please him; by our charity to those whose good he tenders, we may yield an acceptable, though not an adequate return to his benefits. We may also acknowlege his rightful title to all that he bestows on us, by expressions of our fealty, and by payment of some though an inconsiderable quit-rent for the possessions derived from him. *Thou shalt not appear empty before the Lord,* was a statute prescribed to the Jews. Neither did the Gentiles conceive themselves exempted from the like obligation: and though we are now freed perhaps from the circumstantial manner, yet in nowise are we freed from the substantial performance of this sort of gratitude. Especially our charity and beneficence towards good men his servants, our succor and help to persons in distress, are accounted by God a suitable return for his kindness.

7. Lastly, true gratitude for benefits is always attended with the esteem, veneration, and love of the benefactor. Beneficence is a royal and godlike thing, an argument of eminent goodness and power conspiring together: and necessarily therefore as in them that perceive and duly consider it, it begets respect and reverence; so peculiarly in those that feel its benign influence, it produces love and affection, engaging them in mutual correspondence to an extraordinary esteem and benevolence. Example of David.

II. The nature and substance of this duty having been explained, the object and term to which it is to be directed, next calls our attention.

We are to give thanks to God: to him unto whom we are obliged, not for some small inconsiderable trifles, but for the most weighty and valuable benefits: to him who is the Lord and true owner of all things which we partake of: to him who hath created a world to serve us, and hath made all extrinsical things subservient to souls endued with various senses, faculties, and powers: to him who hath inspired us with immortal mind, and impressed on them perspicuous characters of his own divine essence: to him who vouchsafes to grant us a free access unto, a constant intercourse with, himself; who invites us to a spiritual feast, and styles us friends and children. Is there any thing more than this? Yes: to him, who, that he might redeem us from misery and advance our estate, condescended to debase himself and eclipse the brightness of his glorious majesty; who not only thus descended, but designed thereby to exalt us to a participation of his royal dignity: to him who did all this without any necessity, most willingly, and who out of pure bounty is our friend and benefactor; preventing not only our desires, but our knowlege; surpassing not our deserts only, but our wishes: to him who did not lately begin, and will not suddenly cease; who is neither uncertain nor mutable in his intentions: to him whom no ingratitude or disobedience of ours can divert from his steady purpose; who is as merciful and gracious as he is liberal and munificent; not only bestowing on us innumerable gifts, but pardoning our innumerable offences: to him, who, as St. James saith, *giveth freely and upbraideth no man*, exacting no impossible or burthensome returns to him, whose benefits to acknowlege is the greatest benefit of all, to celebrate whose praise is the supreme degree of felicity: in a word, to him whose benefits are immensely great, innumerably many, inexpressibly good and precious. To this God, to this great, this only benefactor, we owe this most natural and easy, this most just and equal, this

most sweet and pleasant duty of giving thanks; which if we wilfully refuse or carelessly neglect to pay, we are not only monstrously ungrateful and wicked, but deplorably foolish and miserable. The time determined in the word *always* is reserved for the next discourse.

SERMON VIII.

THE DUTY OF THANKSGIVING.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 20.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God.

THESE words, although (as the very syntax doth immediately discover) they bear a relation to, and have a fit coherence with those that precede, may yet, (especially considering St. Paul's style and manner of expression in the preceptive and exhortative part of his epistles,) without any violence or prejudice on either hand, be severed from the context, and considered distinctly by themselves. And (to avoid incumbrance by farther comparison) so taking them we may observe that every single word among them carries with it something of notable emphasis and especial significancy. The first ['giving thanks'] expresses the substance of a duty, to which we are exhorted. The next (I mean in order of construction) ['to God'] denotes the object or term to which it is directed. The following ['always'] determines the main circumstance of this and all other duties, the time of performance. The last ['for all things'] declares the adequate matter of the duty, and how far it should extend. These particulars I shall consider severally and in order.

I. First then, concerning the duty itself, 'to give thanks,' or rather, 'to be thankful;' (for εὐχαριστεῖν doth not only signify *gratias agere, reddere, dicere,* to 'give,' 'render,' or 'declare thanks,' but also *gratias habere, grate affectum esse,* to be 'thankfully disposed,' to entertain a grateful affection, sense or memory; in which more comprehensive notion I mean to

consider it, as including the whole duty or virtue of gratitude due to Almighty God for all his benefits, favors, and mercies;) I say, concerning this duty itself, (abstractedly considered,) as it involves a respect to benefits or good things received; so in its employment about them it imports, requires, or supposes these following particulars.

1. It implies a right apprehension of, and consequently a considerate attention unto, benefits conferred. For he that is either wholly ignorant of his obligations, or mistakes them, or passes them over with a slight and superficial view, can nowise be grateful. 'Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.' 'Men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doings.' 'The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all that have pleasure therein.' 'O taste (first, and then) see that the Lord is good.'

This is the method that great master of thanksgiving prescribes; first experimental notice, then wise consideration, then grateful sense, then public acknowlegement. And those we find both by him and by the Prophet Isaias (in the very same words) reprehended as wickedly ingrateful persons, who 'regarded not the work of the Lord, nor considered the operation of his hands.' 'Tis part therefore of this duty incumbent on us, to take notice of diligently and carefully to consider the divine benefits; not to let them pass undiscerned and unregarded by us, as persons either wofully blind, or stupidly drowsy, or totally unconcerned.

'Tis a general fault that the most common and frequent, the most obvious and conspicuous favors of God, (like the ordinary phenomena of nature, which, as Aristotle observes, though in themselves most admirable, are yet least admired,) the constant rising of the sun on us, the descent of fruitful showers, the recourse of temperate seasons, the continuance of our life, the enjoyment of health, the providential dispensation of wealth, and competent means of livelihood, the daily protection from incident dangers, the helps of improving knowlege, obtaining virtue, becoming happy, and such like most excellent benefits, we commonly little mind or regard, and consequently seldom return the thanks due for them. Possibly some rare accidents

of providence, some extraordinary judgment, some miraculous deliverance, may rouse and awaken our attention: (as it is said of the Israelites, 'when he slew them, then they sought him—and remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their Redeemer:') but such advertency is not the effect so much of gratitude as of curiosity or of necessity: the notable rarity invites, or some powerful impulse commands our notice. But the truly grateful industriously design, and are studious to know throughly their obligations, that they may be able to render answerable returns for them.

2. This duty requires a faithful retention of benefits in memory, and consequently frequent reflexions on them. For he that is no longer affected with a benefit than it incurs the sense, and suffers not itself to be disregarded, is far from being grateful; nay, if we believe the philosopher, is ingrateful in the worst kind and highest degree. For, *ingratus est*, saith he, (Seneca,) *qui beneficium accepisse se negat, quod accepit; ingratus est, qui dissimulat; ingratus, qui non reddit: ingratissimus omnium, qui oblitus est.* 'He that falsely denies the reception of a benefit, and he that dissembles it, and he that doth not repay it, is ingrateful; but most ingrateful of all is he that forgets it.' It is a sign the benefit made no deep impression on his mind, since it left no discernible footstep there; that he hardly ever thought of making recompense, since he hath suffered himself to become altogether uncapable of doing it: neither is there any hope of his amending the past neglect; no shame, no repentance, no fair occasion can redeem him from ingratitude, in whom the very remembrance of his obligation is extinguished.

If to be sensible of a present good turn deserved the title of gratitude, all men certainly would be grateful: the Jews questionless were so. When Almighty God, by his wonderful power in extraordinary ways, delivered them from the tyranny and oppression of their prevalent enemies; when he caused streams to gush forth from the bowels of a hard rock to refresh their thirst; when bread descended from heaven in showers, and the winds were winged with flesh, to satisfy their greedy desires; then surely they were not altogether unsensible of the divine goodness; then could they acknowlege his power, and

be forward enough to engage themselves in promises of correspondent observance toward him for the future. But the mischief was, immediately after, as the psalmist complains, 'they forgat his works, and the wonders he had showed them:' 'they remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.' They 'refused to obey, neither were mindful of the wonders that God did among them,' as Nehemiah confesses in their behalf. 'Of the rock that begat them they were unmindful, and forgot the God that formed them,' as it is in Deuteronomy. They distrusted his promises, repined at his dealings, disobeyed his laws, and treacherously apostatised from his covenant. Such were the fruits of their ingrateful forgetfulness; which therefore that people is so often charged with, and so sharply reproved for by the prophets.

On the contrary, we find that great pattern of gratitude, the royal prophet David, continually revolving in his thoughts, imprinting on his fancy, studying and meditating on, recollecting and renewing in his memory, the results of divine favor. 'I will remember,' saith he, 'thy wonders of old; I will meditate of all thy works, and talk of thy doings:' and, 'I remember the days of old; I will meditate on all thy works; I muse on the works of thy hands:' and, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:' and, 'My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches, because thou hast been my help.' No place unfit, it seems, no time unseasonable for the practice of this duty; not the place designed for rest, not the time due to sleep, but, as David thought, more due to a wakeful contemplation of the divine goodness. Whose vigilant gratitude we should strive to imitate, devoting our most solitary and retired, our most sad and serious thoughts (not the studies only of our closet, but the consultations also of our pillow) to the preservation of those blessed ideas; that neither length of time may deface them in our fancy, nor other care thrust them out thence.

It was a satirical answer, (that of Aristotle,) and highly opprobrious to mankind; who, bei g asked, Τί τάχιστον γηράσκει; 'What doth the soonest grow old?' replied, Χάρις, 'Thanks:' and so was that adagial verse, Ἄμ' ἠλέηται, καὶ

τέθνηκεν ἡ χάρις· 'No sooner the courtesy born, than the resentment thereof dead.' Such reproachful aphorisms we should labor to confute, especially as they are applicable to the divine favors, by so maintaining and cherishing our thanks for them, that they neither decay with age, nor prematurely die, nor be buried in oblivion; but may resemble the pictures and poetical descriptions of the Graces, those goodly daughters of heaven, smiling always with a never-fading serenity of countenance, and florishing in an immortal youth.

The middle, we may observe, and the safest, and the fairest, and the most conspicuous places in cities are usually deputed for the erections of statues and monuments dedicated to the memory of worthy men, who have nobly deserved of their countries. In like manner should we in the heart and centre of our soul, in the best and highest apartments thereof, in the places most exposed to ordinary observation, and most secure from the invasions of worldly care, erect lively representations of, and lasting memorials unto, the divine bounty; constantly attending to which we may be disposed to gratitude. Not one blessing, not the least favorable passage of providence ought to perish with us, though long since past, and removed out of the sphere of present sense.

We must not in our old age forget who formed us in the womb, who brought us into the light, who suckled our infancy, who educated our childhood, who governed our youth, who conducted our manhood through the manifold hazards, troubles, and disasters of life. Nor in our prosperity, our affluence of good things, our possession of Canaan, should we be unmindful of him who relieved us in our straits, who supplied our wants, sustained our adversity, who redeemed us from Egypt, and led us through the wilderness. A succession of new and fresh benefits should not (as among some savages the manner is for the young to make away the old) supplant and expunge ancient ones, but make them rather more dear and venerable to us. Time should not weaken or diminish, but rather confirm and radicate in us the remembrance of God's goodness; to render it, as it doth gold and wine, more precious and more strong. We have usually a memory more than enough tenacious of injuries and ill turns done to us: let it never be said,

to the disgrace of that noble faculty, that we can hardly forget the discourtesies of man, but not easily remember the favors of God. But farther,

3. This duty implies a due esteem and valuation of benefits; that the nature and quality, the measure and quantity, the circumstances and consequences of them be well expended; else the gratitude is like to be none, or very defective. For we commensurate our thankfulness, not so much to the intrinsic excellency of things, as to our peculiar estimations of them. A cynic perhaps would not return more thanks for a diamond than for a pebble; nor more gratefully receive a talent of gold than an ounce of copper; because he equally values, or rather alike contemns both.

Wherefore we find our (never-to-be-forgotten) example, the devout thanksgiver, David, continually declaring the great price he set on the divine favors; admiring and displaying their transcendent perfections, their wonderful greatness, their boundless extension, their excessive multitude, their endless duration, their advantageous circumstances, (the excellent needfulness, convenience, and seasonableness of them; together with the admirable freeness, wisdom, and power of the Benefactor, shining forth in and by them.) 'I will praise thee, O Lord,' saith he, 'among the people, I will sing unto thee among the nations: for thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.' And, 'Remember the marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.' 'He is the Lord our God, his judgments are in all the earth.' And again, 'Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.' 'How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God!' and, 'How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O Lord! O how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.' And again, 'His work is honorable and glorious, his righteousness endureth for ever:' and, 'The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works:' and, 'Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his benefits.'

In such manner ought we diligently to survey and judiciously to estimate the effects of divine beneficence, examining every part, and descanting on every circumstance thereof: like those that contemplate some rare beauty, or some excellent picture; some commending the exact proportions, some the graceful features, some the lively colors discernible therein. There is not the least of the divine favors, which, if we consider the condescensive tenderness, the clear intention, the undeserved frankness, the cheerful debonairity expressed therein, hath not dimensions larger than our comprehension, colors too fair, and lineaments too comely for our weak sight thoroughly to discern; requiring therefore our highest esteem and our utmost thanks.

'Tis perhaps somewhat dangerous to affix a determinate value on any of God's benefits: (for to value them seems to undervalue them, they being really inestimable:) what then is it to extenuate, to vilify, to despise the greatest? We should esteem them, as we measure the heavens with our eye, as we compute the sands on the shore, as we would prize inexhaustible mines of gold, and treasures of pearl; that is, by confessing heartily their worth surpasses the strength of our imagination to conceive, and of our speech to utter; that they are immense, innumerable, unconceivable, and unexpressible. But still,

4. 'Giving thanks' imports that benefits be received with a willing mind, a hearty sense, a vehement affection. The forementioned particulars are indeed necessary properties, inseparable concomitants, or prerequisite conditions to: but a cheerful and cordial acceptance of benefits is the form, as it were, and soul, the life and spirit, the principal and most essential ingredient of this duty.

It was not altogether unreasonable, though it went for a paradox, that dictate of the Stoics, that *animus sufficit animo*, and, that *qui libenter accepit, beneficium reddidit:* that he, who with a willing and well affected mind receives a courtesy, hath fully discharged the duty of gratitude; that other endeavors of return and compensation are rather handsome accessions to it, than indispensably requisite to the completion thereof. For as in the collation, it is not the gold or the silver, the food or the apparel, in which the benefit consists, but the will and be-

nevolent intention of him that bestows them ; so reciprocally it is the good acceptance, the sensibleness of and acquiescence in the benefactor's goodness, that constitutes the gratitude ; which who affords, though he be never capable of yielding other satisfaction, *voluntate voluntati satisfecit ;* and, *regum æquavit opes animo*—. It is ingenuity that constitutes (respectively) both a bountiful giver and a thankful receiver. A truly noble benefactor purely aimeth at not any material reward, or advantage to himself; (it were trading this, not beneficence;) but the good profit and content of him, to whom he dispenseth his favor : of which being assured, he rests satisfied, and accounts himself royally recompensed.*

Such a benefactor is Almighty God, and such a tribute he requires of us ; a ready embracement of and a joyful complacency in his kindness; even such as he expressed, who said, ' Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee :' and, ' My soul shall be filled as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips :' and, ' I will praise thee with my whole heart ; I will be glad and rejoice in thee :' and, ' Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, praise his holy name.'

No holocaust is so acceptable to God, as a heart inflamed with the sense of his goodness. He loves not only ἱλαρὸν δότην (*a merry giver,*) but ἱλαρὸν δέκτην (*a cheerful receiver*) also. He would have us, as to desire his favor with a greedy appetite, so to taste it with a savory relish. He designs not only to ' fill ' our mouths with ' food,' ' but our hearts' also ' with gladness.'

We must not seem to grudge or repine, to murmur or disdain, that we are necessitated to be beholden to him ; lest it happen to us as it did to them of whom it is said, ' while the meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came on them, and slew the fattest of them.' Yea, 'tis our duty not to be

* Quoties quod proposuit quis consequitur, capit operis sui fructum. Qui beneficium dat, quid proponit sibi? prodesse ei cui dat, et sibi voluptati esse : non sibi invicem reddi voluit ; aut non fuit beneficium, sed negotiatio. Beneficii proprium est, nihil de reditu cogitare.—Senec.

Nec est dubium quin is qui liberalis benignusque dicitur, officium, non fructum, sequatur.—Cic. de Leg. i.

contented only, but to be delighted, to be transported, to be ravished with the emanations of his love: to entertain them with such a disposition of mind, as the dry and parched ground imbibes the soft dew and gentle showers; as the chill and darksome air admits the benign influences of heavenly light; as the thirsty soul takes in the sweet and cooling stream. He that with a sullen look, a dead heart, a faint sense, a cold hand, embraces the gifts of heaven, is really unthankful, though with deluges of wine and oil he makes the altars to overflow, and clouds the sky with the steam of his sacrifices. But yet, farther,

5. This duty requires due acknowlegement of our obligation, significations of our notice, declarations of our esteem and good acceptance of favors conferred. It is the worst and most detestable of ingratitudes, that which proceeds from pride and scorn: and such is he guilty of, who is either unwilling or ashamed to confess himself obliged; who purposely dissembles a benefit, or disavows a benefactor; who refuses to render those most manifestly due, and most* easily discharged, those neither toilsome nor expensive oblations of praise and acknowlegement. This part of our duty requires that we offer to God, not costly hecatombs, but the 'calves' only 'of our lips,'(as the prophet Hosea speaks;) not the fruit of our lands, but *καρπὸν χειλέων* only, (as the Apostle to the Hebrews styles it,) 'the fruit of our lips, confessing to his name;' that we employ some few blasts of the breath he gave us on the celebration of his goodness, and advancement of his repute. 'I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs,' saith David.

And surely it is the least homage we in gratitude owe, and can pay to Almighty God, to avow our dependence on an obligation to him for the good things we enjoy, to acknowlege that his favors do deserve thanks, to publish to the world our experience of his goodness, to proclaim solemnly with the voice of thanksgiving his most deserved praise; resembling

* *Οὐδὲ γὰρ βαρύ τι καὶ ἐπαχθὲς ἐπιζητεῖ παρ' ἡμῶν, ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ ὁμολογεῖν μόνον τὰς τοσαύτας εὐεργεσίας, καὶ τὰς ὑπὲρ τούτων αὐτῷ εὐχαριστίας ἀναφέρειν.*— Chrys. tom. i. 54.

him who abounds in such expressions as these: 'I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever; with my mouth will I make known his faithfulness to all generations.' 'I will publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all his wondrous works.' 'I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.' 'I have not hid thy righteousness in my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.'

Thus if a grateful affection live in our hearts, it will respire through our mouths, and discover itself in the motion of our lips. There will be a conspiracy and faithful correspondence between our mind and our tongue: if the one be sensible, the other will not be silent; as if the spring works, the wheels will turn about, and the bell not fail to speak. Neither shall we content ourselves in lonesome tunes and private soliloquies, to whisper out the divine praises; but shall loudly excite and provoke others to a melodious consonance with us. We shall, with the sweet singer of Israel, cite and invoke heaven and earth; the celestial choir of angels; the several estates and generations of men, the numberless company of all the creatures, to assist and join in concert with us, in celebrating the worthy deeds, and magnifying the glorious name of our most mighty Creator, of our most bountiful Benefactor.

Gratitude is of a fruitful and diffusive nature, of a free and communicative disposition, of an open and sociable temper: it will be imparting, discovering, and propagating itself: it affects light, company, and liberty; it cannot endure to be smothered in privacy and obscurity. Its best instrument therefore is speech, that most natural, proper, and easy mean of conversation, of signifying our conceptions, of conveying, and as it were transfunding our thoughts and passions into each other.* This therefore *glory of ours*, and best *organ* that we have, (as the psalmist seems to call it,) our tongue, we should in all reason devote to the honor, and consecrate to the praise of him who made it, and who conserves it still in tune.

And, the farther to provoke us, we may consider that it

* Ψυχὴ γὰρ, οἶμαι, ψυχῇ καὶ πνεῦμα πνεύματι συναπτόμενα κατὰ τὴν τοῦ λόγου σποράν, &c.—Clem. Alex. Strom. i. p. 270.

hath been the manner prompted by nature, and authorised by general practice, for men of all nations, and all times, and all ways, by composed hymns and panegyrical elogies, to express their gratitude for the gifts of nature, and for the benefits indulged by Providence; in their public sacrifices and solemn festivities extolling the excellent qualities of their imaginary deities, and reciting the famous achievements of their heroes and supposed benefactors: to whose favorable help and blessing, in their conceit, they owed the fruits of the earth, the comforts of life, the defence and patronage of their countries: being indeed mistaken in the object, but not transgressing in the substance of the duty; paying a due debt, though to false creditors. And I wish we were as ready to imitate them in the one, as we are, perhaps, prone to blame them for the other. For, certainly, acknowlegements of the divine goodness, and solemn testifications of our thankful sense thereof, (whatever the abused world may now imagine,) was always, is now, and ever will be the principal and most noble part of all religion immediately addressed to God. But moreover,

6. This duty requires endeavors of real compensation, and a satisfactory requital of benefits, according to the ability and opportunity of the receiver: that we do not only verbally *dicere*, and *agnoscere;* but really *agere*, and *referre gratias:* that to him, who hath by his beneficence obliged us, we minister reciprocal assistance, comfort, and relief, if he need them, and be capable to receive them; however, by evident testimonies to discover our ready disposition to make such real returns; and withal to suit our actions to his good liking, and in our carriage to comply with his reasonable desires. For, 'as the earth which drinketh the rain often coming on it,' and having been by great labor tilled and manured with expense, yieldeth yet no 'meet herbage' or 'fruit agreeable to the expectation of him that dresseth it,' but is either wholly barren, or produceth only 'thorns and briars,' is (as the Apostle to the Hebrews tells us) 'to be reprobated, and nigh unto cursing;' that is, deserves no farther care or culture to be employed on it, and is to be reputed desperately worthless: so is he, (that we may apply an *apodosis* to the Apostle's comparison,)

who, daily partaking the influences of divine providence and bounty, affords no answerable return, to be accounted execrably unthankful, and unworthy of any farther favor to be showed toward him.

Tis true, our 'righteousness' (or 'beneficence,' so the word there signifies) 'doth not extend unto God:' his benefits exceed all possibility of any proportionable requital: he doth not need, nor can ever immediately receive any advantage from us: we cannot enrich him with our gifts, who by unquestionable right, and in unalterable possession, is Lord and Master of all things that do actually or can possibly exist; nor advance him by our weak commendations, who already enjoyeth the supreme pitch of glory; nor any way contribute to his in itself complete and indefectible beatitude. Yet we may by apposite significations declare our willingness to serve and exalt him: we may by our obsequious demeanor highly please and content him: we may, by our charity and benignity to those whose good he tenders, yield (though not an adequate, yet) an acceptable return to his benefits. 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?' saith David, in way of counsel and deliberation: and thereon resolves, 'I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord: I will pay my vows unto the Lord.' Seasonable benedictions, officious addresses, and faithful performances of vows, he intimates to bear some shadow at least, some resemblance of compensation. And so did his wise son likewise, when he thus advised, 'Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of thy increase.'

Almighty God, though he really doth, and cannot otherwise do, yet will not seem to bestow his favors altogether *gratis*, but to expect some competent return, some small use and income from them. He will assert his rightful title, and be acknowleged the chief proprietary, by signal expressions of our fealty, and the payment of some though inconsiderable quit-rent, for our possessions derived from him: he will rather himself be seemingly indigent, than permit us to be really ingrateful. For knowing well that our performance of duty and respect toward him greatly conduceth to our comfort and hap-

piness,* he requireth of us such demonstrations of them, as we conveniently are able to exhibit; he appoints services expressive of thankfulness, exacts tributes and customs, demands loans and benevolences, encourages and accepts free-will offerings from us. 'Thou shalt not appear empty before the Lord,' was a statute to the Jews, qualified and moderated by certain measures: the first-fruits of their lands, the first-born of their cattle and of themselves, the tenths of their annual increase, and a certain allotment from the spoils acquired in wars, did God challenge to himself, as fitting recompenses due for his bounty to and care over them.

Neither did the Gentiles conceive themselves exempted from the like obligation. For the *ἀκροθίνια*, the 'top' or 'chief of their corn heaps,' they were wont to consecrate unto him who had blessed their fields with increase; and the *ἀκρόλεια*, 'the first and best of the prey,' they dedicated to the adornment of his temple by whose favorable disposal they had obtained the victory. Neither would they sooner begin their meal, and partake of their necessary refreshment, than, by pouring forth their gratulatory libation, they had performed some homage to heaven for it.

——— *οὐδέ τις ἔτλη*
Πρὶν πιέειν, πρὶν λεῖψαι ὑπερμενέϊ Κρονίωνι,†

was the custom, it seems, in Homer's time. I shall not insist on their *ἀναθήματα*, their anniversary or their casual sacrifices; but only observe, (what, if seasonable, might by many sufficient testimonies be evinced,) that those men (at least the most intelligent of them) were not so senseless as to imagine that the gods, to whom they performed those services, and devoted those oblations, did any wise need, or were truly benefited by them; but that they esteemed it a comely thing, by the most significant means they could invent, to declare their grateful sense of the divine goodness and indulgence toward them.‡

* *Ἀκήρατος γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἡ οὐσία καὶ ἀνενδεὴς οὖσα, οὐδενὸς ἑτέρου προσδεῖται· οἱ δὲ αἰνοῦντες αὐτὸν, αὐτοὶ λαμπρότεροι γίνονται.*—S. Chrys. in Ps. cxliv. p. 885. Savil.

† Hom. Il. H. ad finem.

‡ Vid. Platonis Alcib. ii. *Οὐ γὰρ, οἶμαι, τοιοῦτόν ἐστι τὸ τῶν θεῶν, ὥστε ὑπὸ δώρων παράγεσθαι, οἷον κακὸν τοκιστὴν,* &c.

And though we are, perhaps, disobliged now from the circumstantial manner, yet are we no wise freed from (but rather more strongly engaged to) the substantial performance of this sort of gratitude. We are to offer still, not dead 'bulls and goats,' but, as St. Paul saith, 'our own bodies, living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God.' We are excused from material, but are yet bound to yield πνευματικὰς θυσίας, 'spiritual sacrifices' unto God, as St. Peter tells us. We must burn incense still, that of fervent devotion; and send up continually to heaven θυσίαν τῆς αἰνέσεως, that 'thank-offering of praise,' which the Apostle to the Hebrews mentions. We must consecrate the first-born of our souls, (pure and holy thoughts,) and the first-fruits of our strength, (our most active endeavors,) to God's service. We must slay our impure desires, mortify our corrupt affections, and abandon our selfish respects for his sake. We must give him our hearts, and present our wills intirely to his disposal. We must vow to him, and pay the daily oblation of sincere obedience. We must officiously attend his pleasure, and labor to content him by an innocent and unblemished conversation. With these things Almighty God is effectually gratified; he approves of and accepts these, as real testimonies of our thankfulness, and competent returns of his benefits.

Especially our charity and beneficence, our exhibiting love and respect to good men, (his faithful servants and near relations,) our affording help and succor to persons in need and distress, he accounts a suitable retaliation of his kindness, acknowleges to be an obligation laid on himself, and hath by settled rules and indispensable promises obliged himself to requite them. For, 'He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, he will pay him again:' and, 'God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister:' and, 'To do good and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased:' and, 'I desire fruit,' saith St. Paul to the Philippians, 'that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of

a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.' And, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it to (that is, fed, and clothed, and comforted) the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,' saith our Saviour; manifestly declaring that the good we do, and the respect we show unto good and needy men, God reckons it done unto himself.

And this point I shall conclude with the sayings of the wise Hebrew philosopher Ben-Sirach, 'He that keepeth the law, bringeth offerings enough: He that taketh heed to the commandment, offereth a peace-offering. He that requiteth a good turn, offereth fine flower: and he that giveth alms, sacrificeth praise. To depart from wickedness is a thing pleasing to the Lord: and to forsake unrighteousness, is a propitiation.' To these I shall only add this one particular:

7. That true gratitude for benefits is always attended with the esteem, veneration, and love of the benefactor. Beneficence is a royal and godlike thing, an argument of eminent goodness and power conspiring; and necessarily therefore, as in them that perceive and duly consider it, it begets respect and reverence; so peculiarly in those that feel its benign influence, it produces love and affection: like the heavenly light, which to all that behold it appears glorious; but more powerfully warms those that are directly subject to its rays, and is by them more vigorously reflected.

And as to those that are immediately concerned therein, it imports more particular regard and good-will; so, if they be duly sensible thereof, it engages them in mutual correspondence to an extraordinary esteem and benevolence: such as David on this account professes to have been in himself toward God, and frequently excites others to. 'I will love thee, O Lord my strength.' 'I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised.' 'The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.' 'I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.' And, (in the Gospel,) 'Because her sins, being many, were forgiven, therefore she loved much.' So true it is, that sense of favor indulged is naturally productive of love.*

* Ἔστιν χάρις γὰρ τὴν χάριν τίκτουσ' ἀεί.—Soph.

Thus have I plainly and simply presented you with what my meditations suggested concerning the nature and substance of this duty, with the several branches sprouting from the main stock thereof: I proceed now to that which will exceedingly inlarge the worth, and engage to the performance thereof.

II. The object and term to which it is to be directed; we are to give thanks 'to God.' 'To God,' I say; that is, to him, unto whom we are obliged, not for some small and inconsiderable trifles, but for the most weighty and valuable benefits: from whom we receive, not few or some, but all good things; whatever is necessary for our sustenance, convenient for our use, pleasant for our enjoyment; not only those that come immediately from his hand, but what we obtain from others, who from him receive both the will and the power, the means and the opportunities of doing us good: to whom we owe, not only what we ever did or do at present possess, or can hereafter hope for of good; but that we were, are, or shall ever be in capacity to receive any: to the author, upholder, and preserver of our being; without whose goodness we had never been, and without whose care we cannot subsist one moment.

To him who is the Lord and true owner of all things we partake of; whose air we breathe, whose ground we tread on, whose food sustains us; whose wholly we are ourselves, both the bodies we carry about us, (which is 'the work of his hands,') and the soul we think with, which was breathed from his mouth.

To him who hath created a whole world to serve us, a spacious, a beautiful, a stately world for us to inhabit and to disport in; who hath subjected so fair a territory to our dominion, and consigned to our use so numerous a progeny of goodly creatures, to be managed, to be governed, to be enjoyed by us.

So that wherever we direct our eyes, whether we reflect them inward on ourselves, we behold his goodness to occupy and penetrate the very root and centre of our beings; or extend them abroad toward the things about us, we may perceive ourselves inclosed wholly, and surrounded with his benefits. At home we find a comely body framed by his curious artifice, various organs fitly proportioned, situated, and tempered for

strength, ornament, and motion, actuated by a gentle heat, and invigorated with lively spirits, disposed to health, and qualified for a long endurance; subservient to a soul endued with divers senses, faculties, and powers, apt to inquire after, pursue, and perceive various delights and contents. To the satisfaction of which all extrinsical things do minister matter and help; by his kind disposal who furnishes our palates with variety of delicious fare, entertains our eyes with pleasant spectacles, ravishes our ears with harmonious sounds, perfumes our nostrils with fragrant odors, cheers our spirits with comfortable gales, 'fills our hearts with food and gladness,' supplies our manifold needs, and protects us from innumerable dangers.

To him who hath inspired us with immortal minds, and impressed on them perspicuous characters of his own divine essence; hath made us, not in some superficial lineaments, but in our most intimate constitution, to resemble himself, and to partake of his most excellent perfections; an extensive knowlege of truth, a vehement complacency in good, a forward capacity of being completely happy, (according to our degree and within our sphere.) To which blessed end by all suitable means (of external ministry and interior assistance) he faithfully conducts us; revealing to us the way, urging us in our process, reclaiming us when we deviate; engaging us by his commands, soliciting us by gentle advices, encouraging us by gracious promises; instructing us by his holy word, and admonishing us by his loving spirit.

To him who vouchsafes to grant us a free access unto, a constant intercourse and a familiar acquaintance with himself; to esteem and style us his 'friends' and 'children;' to invite us frequently, and entertain us kindly with those most pleasant delicacies of spiritual repast; yea, to visit us often at our home, and (if we admit) to abide and dwell with us; indulging us the enjoyment of that presence, wherein the life of all joy and comfort consists, and to behold the light of his all-cheering countenance.

Is there any thing more? Yes: to him who, to redeem us from misery, and to advance our estate, hath infinitely debased himself, and eclipsed the brightness of his glorious majesty; not disdaining to assume us into a near affinity, yea, into

a perfect union with himself; to inhabit our frail and mortal nature, to undergo the laws and conditions of humanity, to appear in our shape, and converse, as it were, on equal terms with us, and at last to taste the bitter cup of a most painful and disgraceful death for us.

Yea, to him who not only descended from his imperial throne, became a subject, and (which is more) a servant for our sake; but designed thereby to exalt us to a participation of his royal dignity, his divine nature, his eternal glory and bliss; submitting crowns and sceptres to our choice; crowns that cannot fade, and sceptres that can never be extorted from us.

Farther yet, to him, the excellent quality, the noble end, the most obliging manner of whose beneficence doth surpass the matter thereof, and hugely augment the benefits: who, not compelled by any necessity, not obliged by any law, (or previous compact,) not induced by any extrinsic arguments, not inclined by our merits, not wearied with our importunities, not instigated by troublesome passions of pity, shame, or fear, (as we are wont to be,) not flattered with promises of recompense, nor bribed with expectation of emolument, thence to accrue unto himself; but being absolute master of his own actions, only both lawgiver and counsellor to himself, all-sufficient, and incapable of admitting any accession to his perfect blissfulness; most willingly and freely, out of pure bounty and goodwill, is our Friend and Benefactor; preventing not only our desires, but our knowlege; surpassing not our deserts only, but our wishes, yea, even our conceits, in the dispensation of his inestimable and unrequitable benefits; having no other drift in the collation of them, beside our real good and welfare, our profit and advantage, our pleasure and content.

To him who not lately began, or suddenly will cease, that is either uncertain or mutable in his intentions, but from everlasting designed, continues daily, and will (if we suffer him) to all eternity persevere unmoveable in his resolutions to do us good.

To him whom no ingratitude, no undutiful carriage, no rebellious disobedience of ours, could for one minute wholly remove, or divert from his steady purpose of caring for us: who

regards us, though we do not attend to him; procures our welfare, though we neglect his concernments; employs his restless thought, extends his watchful eye, exerts his powerful arm, is always mindful, and always busy to do us good; watching over us when we sleep, and remembering us when we forget ourselves: in whom yet 'tis infinite condescension to think of us, who are placed so far beneath his thoughts; to value us who are but dust and dirt; not to despise and hate us, who are really so despicable and unworthy. For 'though he dwelleth on high,' saith the psalmist truly and emphatically, 'he humbleth himself to behold the things that are done in heaven and earth.'

To him that is as merciful and gracious, as liberal and munificent toward us; that not only bestows on us more gifts, but pardons us more debts, forgives us more sins, than we live minutes; that with infinite patience endures, not only our manifold infirmities and imperfections, but our petulant follies, our obstinate perversenesses, our treacherous infidelities; overlooks our careless neglects and our wilful miscarriages; puts up the exceedingly many outrageous affronts, injuries, and contumelies continually offered to his supreme Majesty by us base worms, whom he hath always under his feet, and can crush to nothing at his pleasure.

To him yet, who, as St. James saith, 'giveth freely, and upbraideth no man;' who calls us neither very frequently nor over strictly to accounts; who exacts of us no impossible, no very difficult, no greatly burdensome or costly returns; being satisfied with the cheerful acceptance of his favors, the hearty acknowlegements of his goodness, the sincere performance of such duties, to which our own welfare, comfort, and advantage (rightly apprehended) would otherwise abundantly dispose us.

To him, lastly, whose benefits to acknowlege is the greatest benefit of all; to be enabled to thank whom deserves our greatest thanks; to be sensible of whose beneficence, to meditate on whose goodness, to admire whose excellency, to celebrate whose praise, is heaven itself and paradise, the life of angels, the quintessence of joy, the supreme degree of felicity.

In a word, to him whose benefits are immensely great, innu-

merably many, unexpressibly good and precious. For 'who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can show forth all his praise?' said he, who had employed often his most active thoughts and his utmost endeavors thereon, and was incomparably better able to do it.

To this God, to this great, to this only Benefactor of ours, we owe this most natural and easy, this most just and equal, this most sweet and pleasant duty of giving thanks. To whom if we wilfully refuse, if we carelessly neglect to pay it, I shall only say thus much, that we are not only monstrously ingrateful, and horribly wicked, but abominably foolish, and deplorably miserable. I shall repeat this sentence once again, and wish it may have its due effect on us: To this great, to this only Patron and Benefactor of ours, if we do not in some measure discharge our due debt of gratitude for his inestimable benefits and mercies, we are to be adjudged not only most prodigiously unthankful, most detestably impious, but most wofully stupid also and senseless, most desperately wretched and unhappy.

I should now proceed to consider the circumstance of time determined in the word *always;* and the extension of the matter implied in those words, *for all things;* and then to subjoin some farther inducements or arguments persuasive to the practice of this duty. But the time (and, I fear, your patience) failing, I shall reserve them to some other opportunity.

SUMMARY OF SERMON IX.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 20.

RECAPITULATION of heads in the preceding discourse.

III. Consideration of the circumstance of time allotted to the performance of this duty of *giving thanks*, expressed by that universal and unlimited term, *always*.

This not to be understood as if thereby we were obliged every instant actually to remember, to consider, and to acknowlege the divine benefits; for the deliberate operations of our minds being sometimes wholly interrupted by sleep, and at others preoccupied by many reasonable employments, it were impossible to comply with an obligation of this duty so interpreted.

We may therefore observe that the Hebrews are wont, in way of synecdoche, or grammatical hyperbole, so to use words of this kind, that their universal importance ought to be restrained by the quality or circumstances of the matter about which they treat. Various instances given of this from holy Scripture; whence it appears that such injunctions as that in the text are to be taken in a sense so qualified, that the observance of them may be at least morally possible.

Thus far we may limit the extension of this seemingly boundless term; but we can hardly allow any farther restriction without destroying its natural signification, or diminishing its due emphasis: as far therefore as it is possible for us, we must endeavor always to perform this duty of gratitude to God; and consequently,

1. Hereby is required that we do often actually meditate on, be sensible of, confess and celebrate the divine beneficence. If God incessantly demonstrates himself gracious unto us, we are in all reason obliged frequently to confess ourselves grateful unto him. Instance of King David, who seems to have approached very near to the complete performance of this duty. If his most excellent example does not provoke us to emulation, that of Epictetus, a heathen, may confound us with shame : his remarkable words quoted. And although neither the admonition of prophets, nor the precepts of philosophers, nor the examples of both, should prevail; yet might the precedents of dumb and senseless creatures animate us thereto; for they never cease to obey the law imposed on them by their Maker, and without intermission glorify him : this point enlarged on.

2. *Giving thanks always* may import our appointing and punctually observing certain convenient times of performing this duty; that is, of seriously meditating on, and affectionately acknowleging the divine bounty. Instance of the Jewish sacrifice, rendered by the Greek translators, *the continual sacrifice*. As that sacrifice, being offered constantly at a set time, was thence denominated *continual*, so perhaps may we, by constantly observing some fit returns of praise and thanksgiving, be said *always to give thanks*.

In determining the seasons and proportions of this duty, we cannot use a better standard than that of the royal prophet.

3. But farther, *giving thanks always* may import a vigilant attendance on this duty, such as men bestow on their employments, of which, though the actual prosecution ceases, yet the design continually proceeds; just as we say, such an one is writing a book, or building a house, though he may at the present time be occupied by some other employment; because

his design never sleeps, and his purpose continues uninterrupted.

4. This term *always* necessarily implies a ready disposition or habitual inclination to give thanks, ever permanent in us; that our *hearts*, as David's was, be fixed *always*, that is, fittingly prepared and steadily resolved to thank and praise God.

5. Lastly; *giving thanks always* imports that we readily embrace every opportunity of actually expressing our thankfulness: for so in some places of Scripture, what is injoined to be done *continually*, is in others only required to be done on all opportunities. It is true that no time is unfavorable: every moment we receive favors, and therefore every minute we owe thanks; yet there are some especial seasons that do more importunately require them: such pointed out at length. So much concerning the time of performing this duty.

IV. The matter of it is considered; *for all things*. Quotation from St. Chrysostom, in which he despairs to recount all the benefits and good things for which he stands engaged to God. The devout psalmist similarly affected, Ps. cxxxix. 17. 18. xxxvi. 5-7. We need not therefore confound ourselves by launching out into this immense ocean; but to observe some little distinction, it may be said,

1. We are to give thanks not only for great and notable benefits, but for the least and most ordinary of God's favors; though indeed none are in themselves small and inconsiderable: this point enlarged on.

2. We are to render thanks not only for new and present benefits, but for all we have formerly, all that we may hereafter receive. Example of David recommended; who, in praising God for favors conferred on him, looked back to the earliest period of his existence: also that of St. Paul. The hope and foresight also of future blessings shown worthily to claim our thanks, from 1 Pet. i. 3. 4.

3. We should bless God not only for new, rare, and extraordinary events of Providence, but for the common daily benefits and indulgences thereof: moreover these favors are usually the greatest and most valuable in their own nature.

4. We should give thanks not only for private and particular, but for public benefits also, and for such as befal others: exhortation of St. Paul on this head, 1 Tim. ii. 1. As we are all citizens of the world, we are all concerned in its good constitution, and thence obliged to adore thankfully its benevolent upholder. If we consult all history, we shall find innumerable instances of thankful acknowlegement to the divine goodness on this head. Reasons urged to this duty, not only from a common interest, but from charity, humanity, and the delight which such a disposition, when cultivated, bestows on ourselves. Example of David.

5. We are obliged to give thanks not only for pleasant and prosperous occurrences of Providence, but for those also which are adverse to our desire, and distasteful to our natural sense: we are bound to pay thanks, not only for our food, but for our physic also, which, though ungrateful to our palate, is profitable for our health: reasons for this given.

6. Lastly, we are obliged to thank God not only for corporeal and temporal benefits, but also, and that principally, for spiritual and eternal blessings: as we are apt to desire more vehemently, and more passionately to bewail the loss of, temporal good things, so are we wont more sincerely and seriously to express our gratitude for the reception of them, than of others relating to our spiritual and eternal welfare; wherein we act under a false judgment: this shown: injunction of our Saviour to his disciples considered, Luke x. 20. Indebted as we are to God for our creation, and for the excellent faculties with which he has endowed us, we are still more so for our redemption and the circumstances

of inexpressible love and grace therein declared: this subject enlarged on.

Concluding considerations persuasive to the practice of this duty.

I. First we may consider that there is no disposition more deeply radicated in the original constitution of all souls endued with any kind of perception or passion, than that of being sensible of benefits received, being ready with suitable expressions to acknowlege them, and endeavoring competently to recompense them: even the worst of men retain something of this natural inclination, and the very brute creation gives evidence of it: how monstrous a thing therefore in us is ingratitude towards God, from whom alone we receive whatever we enjoy, whatever we can expect of good!

II. The second obligation to this duty is most just and equal; since we are in all reason indebted for what is freely given, as well as for what is lent to us: for the freeness of the giver, his not exacting security, nor expressing conditions of return, doth not diminish, but rather increase the debt: this enlarged on.

III. Thirdly, this is a most sweet and delightful duty: as the performance of it proceeds from good humor and a cheerful disposition of mind, so it feeds and foments them both. Prayer reminds us of our imperfections and wants; confession of our misdeeds and bad deserts; but thanksgiving includes nothing uneasy or unpleasant, nothing but the memory and sense of exceeding goodness.

Other considerations briefly added: viz. that this duty is of all others most acceptable to God and profitable to us, inducing him to bestow more, and qualifying us to receive it: that it promotes and facilitates the practice of all other duties: that the memory of past benefits, and sense of those present, confirms our faith and nourishes our hopes: that the circumstances of

the divine beneficence mightily strengthen the obligation to this duty: that *giving thanks* hath *de facto* always been the principal part of religion, whether instituted by divine command, prompted by natural reason, or propagated by general tradition. Concluding prayer.

SERMON IX.

OF THE DUTY OF THANKSGIVING.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 20.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God.

HAVING formerly discoursed on these words, I observed in them four particulars considerable: 1. The substance of a duty, to which we are exhorted, to give thanks; 2. The term unto which it is directed, to God; 3. The circumstance of time determined in that word *always;* 4. The extent of the matter about which the duty is employed, 'for all things.' Concerning the two former particulars, wherein the duty consisted, and wherefore especially related unto God, I then represented what did occur to my meditation.

III. I proceed now to the third, the circumstance of time allotted to the performance of this duty, expressed by that universal and unlimited term, *always.*

Which yet is not so to be understood, as if thereby we were obliged in every instant (or singular point of time) actually to remember, to consider, to be affected with, and to acknowlege the divine benefits: for the deliberate operations of our minds being sometimes wholly interrupted by sleep, otherwhile preoccupied by the indispensable care of serving our natural necessities, and with attendance on other reasonable employments, it were impossible to comply with an obligation to the performance of this duty so interpreted. And those maxims of law, *impossibilium nulla est obligatio,* and *quæ rerum natura prohibentur, nulla lege confirmata sunt,* (that is, 'no law or

precept can oblige to impossibilities,') being evidently grounded on natural equity, seem yet more valid in relation to his laws, who is the Judge of all the world, and in his dispensations most transcendently just and equal.

We may therefore observe that the Hebrews are wont (in way of synecdoche, or grammatical hyperbole) so to use words of this kind, that their universal importance ought to be restrained by the quality or circumstances of the matter about which they converse. As when our Saviour saith, 'Ye shall be hated of all men for my sake;' *all* is not to be taken for every singular person, (since there were some that loved our Saviour, and embraced the evangelical doctrine) but for many, or the most. And when David saith, 'There is none that doeth good;' he seemeth only to mean that in the general corruption of his times there were few righteous persons to be found. And so *for ever* is often used, not for a perpetual and endless, but for a long and lasting duration; and *always*, not for a continual, unintermitted state of being, or action, but for such a perseverance as agrees to the condition of the thing to which it is applied.

'Tis, for instance, prescribed in Exodus, that Aaron should 'bear the judgment of the children of Israel (the Urim and Thummim) on his heart before the Lord continually;' that is, (not in absolute and rigorous acceptation continually, but) constantly ever when he went into the holy place to discharge the pontifical function, as the context declares. And our Saviour in the gospel saith of himself, Ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα, 'I always taught in the temple;' that is, very often, and ever when fit occasion was presented. And the Apostles, immediately after Christ's ascension, ἦσαν διαπαντὸς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, 'were,' as St. Luke tells us, 'continually in the temple, praising and blessing God;' that is, they resorted thither constantly at the usual times or canonical hours of prayer. In like manner those injunctions (of nearest affinity) of 'rejoicing,' of 'giving thanks always,' and particularly of 'praying without ceasing,' (as I have shown more largely in another discourse,) are to be taken in a sense so qualified, that the observance of them may be at least morally possible.

Thus far warrantably we may limit the extension and mollify

the rigor of this seemingly boundless term; but we can hardly allow any farther restriction, without destroying the natural signification, or diminishing the due emphasis thereof. As far therefore as it is possible for us, we must endeavor always to perform this duty of gratitude to Almighty God: and consequently,

1. Hereby is required a frequent performance thereof; that we do often actually meditate on, be sensible of, confess and celebrate the divine beneficence. For what is done but seldom or never, (as we commonly say,) cannot be understood done always, without a *catachresis*, or abuse of words too enormous. As therefore no moment of our life wants sufficient matter, and every considerable portion of time ministers notable occasion of blessing God; as he allows himself no spacious intervals or discontinuances of doing us good; so ought we not to suffer any of those many days (vouchsafed by his goodness) to flow beside us, void of the signal expressions of our dutiful thankfulness to him; nor to admit in our course of life any long vacations from his duty. If God incessantly, and through every minute, demonstrates himself gracious unto us; we in all reason are obliged frequently and daily to declare ourselves grateful unto him.

So at least did David, (that most eminent example in this kind, and therefore most apposite to illustrate our doctrine, and to enforce the practice thereof;) for, 'every day,' saith he, 'I will bless thee; I will praise thy name for ever and ever.' *Every day.* The heavenly bodies did not more constantly observe their course, than he his diurnal revolutions of praise: every day in his calendar was as it were festival, and consecrated to thanksgiving. Neither did he adjudge it sufficient to devote some small parcels of each day to this service; for 'my tongue,' saith he, 'shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long;' and again, 'My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day, for I know not the numbers thereof.' The benefits of God he apprehended so great and numerous, that no definite space of time would serve to consider and commemorate them. He resolves therefore otherwhere to bestow his whole life on that employment: 'While I live I will praise the Lord: I will sing

praises unto my God while I have any being;' and 'I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.' No man can reasonably pretend greater impediments, or oftener avocations from the practice of this duty, than he, on whom the burden of a royal estate, and the care of governing a populous nation, were incumbent: yet could not they thrust out of his memony, nor extinguish in his heart, the lively sense of divine goodness; which (notwithstanding the company of other secular incumbrances) was always present to his mind, and like a spirit, (excluded from no place by any corporeal resistance,) did mingle with and penetrate all his thoughts, and affections, and actions. So that he seems to have approached very near to the complete performance of this duty, according to the extremity of a literal interpretation, and to have been always, without any intermission, employed in giving thanks to God. The consideration, methinks, of so noble a pattern, adjoined to the evident reasonableness of the duty, should engage us to the frequent practice thereof.*

But if the consideration of this excellent example do not, yet certainly that may both provoke us to emulation, and confound us with shame, of Epictetus, a heathen man, whose words to this purpose seem very remarkable: Εἰ γὰρ νοῦν εἴχομεν, saith he in Arrian's Dissert.† ἄλλο τι ἔδει ἡμᾶς ποιεῖν, καὶ κοινῇ, καὶ ἰδίᾳ, ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ θεῖον, καὶ εὐφημεῖν, καὶ ἐπεξέρχεσθαι τὰς χάριτας; οὐκ ἔδει καὶ σκάπτοντας, καὶ ἀροῦντας, καὶ ἐσθίοντας ᾄδειν τὸν ὕμνον τὸν εἰς τὸν Θεόν; Μέγας ὁ Θεὸς, &c. that is, in our language, "If we understood ourselves, what other thing should we do, either publicly or privately, than sing hymns to, and speak well of God, and perform thanks unto him? Ought we not, when we were digging, or ploughing, or eating, to sing a (suitable) hymn to him?‡ Great is God,

* Εἰ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἀνὴρ μυρίαις βαπτιζόμενος φροντίσι, καὶ πανταχόθεν περιελκόμενος, τοσαυτάκις παρεκάλει τὸν Θεόν· τίνα ἂν ἔχοιμεν ἀπολογίαν ἢ συγγνώμην ἡμεῖς, τοσαύτην σχολὴν ἄγοντες, καὶ μὴ συνεχῶς αὐτὸν ἱκετεύοντες, &c.—Chrys. tom. v. p. 76.

† Lib. i. cap. 17.

‡ Πάντα τοίνυν τὸν βίον ἑορτὴν ἄγοντες, πάντη πάντοθεν παρεῖναι τὸν Θεὸν πεπεισμένοι, γεωργοῦμεν αἰνοῦντες, πλέομεν ὑμνοῦντες, κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην πολιτείαν ἐντέχνως ἀναστρεφόμεθα.—Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 517.

in that he hath bestowed on us those instruments wherewith we till the ground: Great is God, because he hath given us hands, a throat, a belly; that we grow insensibly, that sleeping we breathe. Thus" (proceeds he) "should we on every occurrence celebrate God, and superadd of all the most excellent and most divine hymn, for that he hath given us the faculty of apprehending and using these things orderly. Wherefore since most men are blind and ignorant of this, should there not be some one, who should discharge this office, and who should for the rest utter this hymn to God? And what can I, a lame (and decrepit) old man do else, than celebrate God? Were I indeed a nightingale, I would do what belongs to a nightingale; if a swan, what becomes a swan; but since now I am endued with reason, I ought to praise God. This is my duty and concernment, and so I do; neither will I desert this employment while it is in my power; and to the same song I exhort you all." Thus that worthy philosopher, not instructing us only, and exhorting with pathetical discourse, but by his practice inciting us to be continually expressing our gratitude to God.

And although neither the admonition of prophets, nor precepts of philosophers, nor the examples of both, should prevail; yet the precedents, methinks, of dumb and senseless creatures should animate us thereto; which never cease to obey the law imposed on them by their Maker, and without intermission glorify him. For, 'the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowlege. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.' It is St. Chrysostom's argumentation; Καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρὸν ἂν εἴη, saith he, τὸν λογικὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ τῶν ὁρωμένων ἁπάντων τιμιώτερον, ἔλαττον τῆς κτίσεως φέρειν κατὰ τὸν τῆς εὐφημίας λόγον· οὐκ αἰσχρὸν δὲ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄτοπον, &c. "It were an ugly thing, that man, endued with reason, and the most honorable of all things visible, should in rendering thanks and praise be exceeded by other creatures: neither is it only base, but absurd. For how can it be otherwise, since other creatures every day and every hour send up a doxology to their Lord and Maker? For, 'the heavens declare the glory of God,'" &c.

If the busy heavens are always at leisure, and the stupid

earth is perpetually active in manifesting the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Creator; how shameful is it, that we (the flower of his creation, the most obliged, and most capable of doing it) should commonly be either too busy, or too idle to do it; should seldom or never be disposed to contribute our endeavors to the advancement of his glory? But,

2. 'Giving thanks always' may import our appointing, and punctually observing, certain convenient times of performing this duty; that is, of serious meditation on, and affectionate acknowlegement of the divine bounty. We know that all persons, who design with advantage to prosecute an orderly course of action, and would not lead a tumultuary life, are wont to distinguish their portions of time, assigning some to the necessary reflexions of their body, others to the divertisement of their minds, and a great part to the dispatch of their ordinary business: otherwise (like St. James's 'double-minded man') they would be 'unstable in all their ways;' they would ever fluctuate in their resolutions, and be uncertain when, and how, and to what they should apply themselves. And so, this main concernment of ours, this most excellent part of our duty, if we do not depute some vacant seasons for it, and observe some periodical recourses thereof, we shall be tempted often to omit it; we shall be listless to do it, apt to defer it, and easily diverted from it by the encroachments of other less-behoving affairs.

The Jews, to preserve them in the constant exercise of this duty, had instituted by God a sacrifice called תמיד (*juge*,) rendered by the Greek translators, ἡ διαπαντὸς θυσία, 'the continual sacrifice;' (Dan. viii. 11.) to which the divine author of the Epistle to the Hebrews seems to allude, when in these words he exhorts: Δι' αὐτοῦ οὖν ἀναφέρωμεν θυσίαν αἰνέσεως διαπαντὸς τῷ Θεῷ· 'by him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually,' (or the continual sacrifice of praise,) 'the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.' As that sacrifice therefore, being offered constantly at a set time, was thence denominated 'continual;' so perhaps may we, by constantly observing some fit returns of praise and thanksgiving, be said 'always to give thanks.'

In determining the seasons and proportions of which, what

other rule or standard can we better conform to than that of the royal prophet? I shall not urge his example so much; (according to which we should be obliged to a greater frequency;) for, 'seven times a day,' saith he, 'do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments:' but rather allege his general direction and opinion, proposed to us in those words of his; 'It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O thou Most High; to show forth thy loving-kindness every morning, and thy faithfulness every night.' 'It is a good thing;' that is, a seemly, a convenient, a commendable, a due performance: 'every morning;' that is, when our spirits, being recreated with sleep, are become more vigorous, our memories more fresh, our fancies more quick and active: 'to show forth thy loving-kindness;' that is, from a hearty sense of our obligation, to acknowlege the free bounty of him, who in pursuance of his former kindness hath been pleased to accumulate new favors to us; to guard us by his watchful care, when we were buried, as it were, in a senseless ignorance, and total neglect of our own welfare; to raise us from that temporary death, and to confer a new life on us, restoring us to our health, to our means of subsistence, to all the necessary supports, and the desirable comforts of life: 'every night' also; that is, when our spirits are exhausted with action, and our minds tired with thoughtfulness; when we are become weary, not of doing only, but almost of being; we should conclude our toils, and wrap up our cares in the sweet sense and grateful memory of his goodness, who hath protected us so many hours from the manifold dangers, and more sins, to which, by our weakness, and our folly, and our bad inclinations, we are through every minute exposed; and withal hath provided us so easy and so delightful a means of recovering our spent activity, of repairing our decayed strength.

Thus if we constantly begin, and thus close up, thus bound and circumscribe our days, dedicating those most remarkable periods of time to blessing God, and making, as the psalmist speaks, 'the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice' in him: (since beginning and ending do in a manner comprehend the whole; and the morning and evening, in Moses's computation and style, do constitute a day;) we may (not in-

congruously) be supposed and said to 'give thanks always.' But yet farther, this may import,

3. A vigilant attendance on this duty, such as men bestow on their employments, whereof though the actual prosecution ceases, yet the design continually proceeds. As we say, such a one is writing a book, building a house, occupying a piece of land, though he be at that present peradventure sleeping, or eating, or satisfying some other desire; because his design never sleeps, and his purpose persists uninterrupted. And thus, it seems, we are to understand our Saviour and the Apostles, when they exhort us προσκαρτερεῖν, 'to continue instant in prayer and thanksgiving;' and ἀγρυπνεῖν ἐν πάσῃ προσκαρτερήσει, to 'watch with all perseverance;' and γρηγορεῖν, to 'wake in thanksgiving;' and μὴ παύεσθαι, 'not to give over giving thanks:' and to perform these duties ἀδιαλείπτως, 'incessantly,' or 'without giving off;' μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, 'not to grow worse, faint, or faulter:' (which is, in that place, made equivalent to, explicatory of doing duty always.) Which expressions denote a most diligent attendance on these duties; that we may make them not a πάρεργον, a diversion or by-business of our lives, allowing only a perfunctory and desultorious endeavor on them; but esteem them a weighty business, to be pursued with steadfast resolution and unwearied industry.

As our beings and powers did proceed from the goodness, so the results of them naturally tend to the glory of God; and the deliberations of our will ought to conspire with the instincts of our nature; it should be the principal design which our intention should aim at, and our endeavor always drive on, to glorify our Maker. Which doing, we may be reputed to discharge this duty, and in some sense said 'always to give thanks.' But farther,

4. This term ['always'] doth necessarily imply a ready disposition or habitual inclination to give thanks, ever permanent in us: that our 'hearts,' as David's was, be 'fixed' always (that is, fittingly prepared and steadily resolved) to thank and praise God; that our affections be like tinder, though not always inflamed, yet easy inflammable by the sense of his goodness.

'Tis said of the righteous man that 'he is ever merciful, and

lendeth :' not for that he doth ever actually dispense alms, or furnish his poor neighbor with supplies ; but because his mind is ever inclinable to do it when need requires. So a grateful man doth ' always give thanks,' by being disposed to do it on all fit occasions. 'Tis the habit that qualifies and denominates a man such or such in any kind or degree of morality. A good man is in Scripture frequently compared to a ' tree bringing forth fruit in due season ;' and the root thereof is this habitual disposition, which, being nourished by the dew of heaven, and quickened by the benign influence of divine grace, sprouts forth opportunely, and yields a plentiful increase of good fruit. Though we cannot always sing, our organs may be always rightly tuned for praise; at least they should never be unstrung, and wholly out of kelter.

We should maintain in ourselves a constant good temper of mind, that no opportunity surprise, and find us unprepared to entertain worthily the effects of divine favor : otherwise we shall as well lose the benefit as God the thanks and glory due to them. That we be always thus disposed is not impossible, and therefore requisite. But moreover,

5. Lastly, ' giving thanks always ' imports that we readily embrace every opportunity of actually expressing our thankfulness. For so, what in some places of Scripture is enjoined to be done ' continually,' and ' without ceasing,' is in others only required to be done on all opportunities. Which shows that πάντοτε is to be expounded, not so much ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ, ' at all times,' as ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, ' in every season.' So προσευχόμενοι ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ ἐν πνεύματι, ' praying on every opportunity in your spirit :' and, Ἀγρυπνεῖτε οὖν ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ δεόμενοι, ' be watchful, praying in every season.' And this sense seems probably to be chiefly intended by this Apostle, whenever he hath (as he hath often) this expression, πάντοτε εὐχαριστεῖν, that we embrace every overture or fit occasion of giving thanks.

'Tis true no time is unseasonable to do it : every moment we receive favors, and therefore every minute we owe thanks : yet there are some especial seasons that do more importunately require them. We should be like those trees that bear fruit (more or less) continually; but then more kindly and more

abundantly when more powerfully cherished by the heavenly warmth.

When any fresh, any rare, any remarkable benefit happens to us; when prosperous success attends our honest endeavors; when unexpected favors fall as it were of their own accord into our bosoms: (like the grain in the golden age springing ἄσπαρτα καὶ ἀνήροτα, without our care or our toil, for our use and enjoyment;) when we are delivered from straits in our apprehension inextricable, surmount difficulties seeming insuperable, escape hazards (as we suspected) inevitable; then is a special season presented us of offering up the sacrifice of praise to the God of mercy, help, and victory.

When we revolve in our minds (as we should often do) the favorable passages of Providence, that in the whole course of our lives have befallen us: how in our extreme poverty and distress (when perhaps no help appeared, and all hopes seemed to fail us,) God hath raised us up friends who have commiserated, comforted, and succored us; and not only so, but hath changed our sorrowful condition into a state of joy; hath (to use the psalmist's expressions) 'turned our mourning into dancing;' hath 'put off our sackcloth, and girded us with gladness;' hath 'considered our trouble, and known our soul in adversity;' hath 'set our feet in a large room,' and furnished us with plentiful means of subsistence; how in the various changes, and adventures, and travels of our life, on sea and land, at home and abroad, among friends, and strangers, and enemies, he hath protected us from wants and dangers; from devouring diseases, and the distemperatures of infectious air; from the assaults of bloody thieves and barbarous pirates; from the rage of fire, and fury of tempests; from disastrous casualties; from treacherous surprises; from open mischiefs, that with a dreadful face approached and threatened our destruction: then most opportunely should we with all thankful exultation of mind admire and celebrate 'our strength, and our deliverer;' our faithful 'refuge in trouble,' and 'the rock of our salvation.'

Also when the ordinary effects of divine Providence do in any advantageous manner present themselves to our view; when we peruse the volumes of story, and therein observe the various events of human action; especially the seasonable re-

wards of virtue, the notable protections and deliverances of innocence, and the unexpected punishments of malicious wickedness: then we should with thankful acclamations celebrate the divine goodness and justice; joining in concert with that heavenly choir, and saying, 'Hallelujah; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments.'

Or when we contemplate the wonderful works of nature, and, walking about at our leisure, gaze on this ample theatre of the world, considering the stately beauty, constant order, and sumptuous furniture thereof; the glorious splendor and uniform motion of the heavens; the pleasant fertility of the earth; the curious figure and fragrant sweetness of plants; the exquisite frame of animals; and all other amazing miracles of nature, wherein the glorious attributes of God (especially his transcendent goodness) are most conspicuously displayed; so that by them not only large acknowlegements, but even gratulatory hymns, as it were, of praise have been extorted from the mouths of Aristotle, Pliny, Galen, and such like men, never suspected guilty of an excessive devotion;) then should our hearts be affected with thankful sense, and our lips break forth into his praise.

Yea, from every object of sense, from every event of Providence, from every common occurrence, we may extract fit matter of thanksgiving: as did our Saviour, when, considering the stupid infidelity of those proud people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, (who were not at all affected by his miraculous works, nor moved to repentance by his pathetical discourses,) and comparing it with the pious credulity of his meaner disciples, he brake forth into that divine ejaculation; 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast concealed these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἀποκριθεὶς Ἰησοῦς εἶπε, saith the evangelical narration: 'On that occasion Jesus thus spake:' he embraced that convenient opportunity of thankfully acknowleging God's wise and gracious dispensation. And frequent occasion is afforded us daily (were our minds suitably disposed) of doing the like.

But so much concerning the time of performing this duty.

IV. We proceed to the matter thereof, 'for all things.' St. Chrysostom (in his Commentary on the 145th Psalm) having enumerated several particulars for which we are bound to thank God; "Because," (I recite his words punctually rendered,) "because," saith he, "he hath made us, who before had no being, and made us such as we are; because he upholds us being made, and takes care of us continually, both publicly and privately, secretly and openly, with and without our knowlege; for all visible things created for our sake, the ministry of them afforded to us; the conformation of our bodies, the nobleness of our souls; his daily dispensations by miracles, by laws, by punishments; his various and incomprehensible Providence; for the chief of all, that he hath not spared his only-begotten Son for our sake; the benefits conferred on us by baptism, and the other holy mysteries, (or sacraments;) the ineffable good things to be bestowed on us hereafter, the kingdom of heaven, the resurrection, the enjoyment of perfect bliss:" having, I say, in these words comprised the things for which we are obliged to thank and praise God, he thus despondently concludes; (Ἂν γὰρ ἕκαστόν τις τούτων καταλέγῃ, εἰς πέλαγος ἄφατον ἐμπεσεῖται εὐεργεσιῶν, καὶ ὕψεται πόσων ἐστὶν ὑπεύθυνος τῷ Θεῷ.) "If any one shall endeavor to recount particularly every one of these things, he will but plunge himself into an unexpressible deep of benefits, and then perceive for how unexpressibly and inconceivably many good things he stands engaged to God." And to the like *non plus* doth the devout psalmist seem to be reduced, when he thus exclaims, 'How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand.'

I shall not therefore confound myself by launching too far into this immense ocean, nor strive minutely to compute the incomprehensible sum of the divine benefits; but only observe, that in gross, according to our Apostle's calculation, all things, which however happen to us, are ingredients thereof. No occurrence (great or small, common or particular, present or past, pleasant or sad, perpetual or transitory) is excluded from being the subject of our thanksgiving: each one may prove beneficial to us; and we are with a cheerful contentedness and a

grateful resentment to receive them all from God's hand. But to observe some little distinction : I say,

1. We are to give thanks, not only for great and notable benefits, but for the least and most ordinary favors of God : though indeed none of God's favors are in themselves small and inconsiderable. Men are wont to bless themselves, if they receive but a transient glance from a prince's eye; a smile from a great personage; any slender intimation of regard from him that is in capacity to do them good. What is it then to receive the least testimony of his goodwill, from whom alone every good thing can be expected; on whose disposal all happy success of our wishes, our hopes, and our endeavors do intirely depend! We repute him unjust who withholds the least part of what is due from the true owner : and is not he ingrateful then, that omits to render thanks for the least of divine mercies?

'There is one glory of the sun, another of the moon, another of the stars,' saith St. Paul. Some works of God indeed excel in lustre; yet all are glorious, all are to be discerned, all to be esteemed and thankfully entertained by us. The brightness of the one should not wholly obscure the other; if it do, it argues the weakness of our sense, the dulness of our spiritual faculty. For every beam of light that delights our eye, for every breath of air that cheers our spirits, for every drop of pleasant liquor that cools our thirst, for every minute of comfortable repose, for every step we safely take, for the happy issue of the least undertaking, for escaping the vengeance due to an idle word or a wanton thought, we owe a hymn of praise to God. But,

2. We are to render thanks, not only for new and present benefits, but for all we have formerly, all that we may hereafter receive. We find David not only frequently acknowlegeing the gracious dispensations of providence toward him through the whole course of his life, but looking back in his thankful devotions as far as his very original being, and praising God for favors conferred on him beyond his memory, yea before his life. 'I will praise thee,' saith he, 'for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid

from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.' And St. Paul, yet farther reflecting his grateful consideration, blesses God for his favor commenced before the beginning of things. 'Blessed,' saith he, 'be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us before the foundation of the world.'

Neither doth the memory only of former, and the enjoyment of present, but the hope and foresight also of future blessings, worthily claim our thanks. For saith St. Peter, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for you.' Beasts only, and men not much better than they, are affected with present good turns; but men of honest and generous temper resent indifferently the obligations of all times. Sense doth not confine their gratitude, nor absence remove, nor age wear it out. What once is done, is ever done to them; and what of courtesy is purposed, seems to them performed. But having before discoursed somewhat largely concerning the remembrance of benefits, I leave this point. Furthermore.

3. We should bless God, not only for new, rare, extraordinary accidents of providence, but for the common and daily benefits and indulgences thereof. These favors are usually the greatest and most valuable in their own nature. (For what can be imagined of higher consequence to us, than the preservation of our lives and of our estates, by which they are comfortably maintained; than the continuance of our bodies in good health, and our minds in their right wits; than the knowlege of heavenly truth, the encouragements to virtue and piety, the assistances of divine grace, and the promises of eternal bliss continually exhibited to us?*) Shall the com-

* Quem vero astrorum ordines, quem dierum noctiumque vicissi-

monness and continuance of these exceeding favors, that they are not given us once only, and transitorily, but continued, (that is, given us so often as time hath instants,) and with an uninterrupted perseverance renewed unto us; shall this abate and enervate our gratitude, which in all reason should mainly increase and confirm it? But this point I also touched before, and therefore, forbearing to insist thereon, I proceed.

4. We should give thanks, not only for private and particular, but for public benefits also, and for such as befal others. 'I exhort therefore,' saith St. Paul, 'before all things, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men:' not prayers only, for good things to be bestowed on others; but thanksgivings also, for the benefits received by others. (And ὑπὲρ πάντων in our text, however otherwise commonly interpreted, may well admit this sense also; and be taken indifferently, *pro omnibus*, 'for all persons,' and *propter omnia*, 'for all things.')

We are all citizens of the world, and concerned in its good constitution; and thence obliged thankfully to adore the mighty Upholder and wise Governor thereof, praising him for all the general benefits liberally poured forth on mankind. We partake in the commodities of civil society; and therefore should heartily thank him, by whose gracious disposal order is maintained, peace continued, justice administered, plenty provided, our lives made safe and sweet to us therein. We are members of a church, and highly interested in the prosperous estate and well-being thereof: when unity therefore is preserved, and charity abounds; when knowlege is increased, and virtue encouraged; when piety flourishes, and truth triumphs therein; we are bound to render all possible thanks to the gracious bestower of those inestimable blessings.

We are much mistaken in our account, if we either determine our own concernments, or measure this duty, by the narrow rule of our private advantage; for subducting either the benefits commonly indulged to mankind, or those which accrue

tudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemque ea quæ nobis gignuntur ad fruendum non gratum esse cogant; hunc hominem omnino numerare qui decet?—Cic. de Leg. ii.

from the welfare of public society, what possibility will remain of subsistence, of safety, of content unto us? what but confusion, want, violence, and disquiet?

As we are concerned with our utmost endeavors to promote, to wish and pray for, to delight and rejoice in, the public good of mankind, the peace of our country, the prosperity of Sion; so we are to bless and thank him, by whose gracious help and furtherance they are attained.

If we consult all history, (sacred and civil,) we shall find it to contain hardly any thing else considerable, but the earnest endeavors of good men for public benefit, and their thankful acknowlegements to the divine goodness for it. Moses, David, Nehemiah, St. Paul, all the Prophets, and all the Apostles, what other things memorable did they do, but serve God in procuring public good, and bless God for conferring it?

Neither only as we are combined with others in common interest, but without selfish respects, purely out of charity, and humanity, and ingenuous pity, are we obliged to thank God for the benefits he is pleased to impart to others. If on these accounts we are commanded to 'do good to all men;' to 'rejoice with those that rejoice:' to 'love even those that hate us,' and 'bless those that curse us;' 'tis (by fair consequence) surely intended that we should also bless God for the good issue of our honest endeavors, or of our good wishes for them.

And verily could we become endowed with this excellent quality of delighting in others' good, and heartily thanking God for it, we needed not to envy the wealth and splendor of the greatest princes, not the wisdom of the profoundest doctors, not the religion of the devoutest anchorets, no, nor the happiness of the highest angels: for on this supposition, as the glory of all is God's, so the content in all would be ours. All the fruit they can perceive of their happy condition, of what kind soever, is to rejoice in it themselves, and to praise God for it; and this should we then do as well as they. My neighbor's good success is mine, if I equally triumph therein; his riches are mine, if I delight to see him enjoy them: his health is mine, if it refresh my spirits: his virtue mine, if I by it am bettered, and have hearty complacence therein. By this means a man derives a confluence of joy on himself, and makes himself, as

it were, the centre of all felicity; enriches himself with the plenty, and satiates himself with the pleasure, of the whole world: reserving to God the praise, he enjoys the satisfaction of all good that happens to any.

Thus we see David frequently thanking God, not for his favor only and mercy showed particularly to himself, but for his common munificence toward all; for (to use his own phrases) 'his goodness to all, and his tender mercies over all his works;' for 'executing judgment in behalf of the oppressed;' for 'feeding the hungry;' for 'loosening the prisoners;' for 'opening the eyes of the blind;' for 'raising them that are bowed down;' for 'preserving the strangers,' and 'relieving the fatherless and widow;' for 'lifting up the meek;' for 'loving, and caring for, and defending the righteous;' for 'opening his hand, and satisfying the desire of every living thing;' for 'giving to the beast his food, and to the young ravens when they cry unto him;' in a word, for his goodness to every particular creature, not excluding the most contemptible nor the most savage of all. And how affectionately doth St. Paul every where thank God for the growth in grace and spiritual wisdom, for the patience in affliction and perseverance in faith, of those good Christians he writes unto! So should, with an unrestrained exuberance, both our charity to men, and our gratitude to God, abound. But moreover,

5. We are obliged to give thanks, not only for pleasant and prosperous occurrences of providence, but for those also which are adverse to our desire, and distasteful to our natural sense; for poverty, sickness, disgrace; for all the sorrows and troubles, the disasters and disappointments that befal us. We are bound to pay thanks, not for our food only, but for our physic also; (which, though ingrateful to our palate, is profitable for our health:) we are obliged, in the school of providence, not only for the good instructions, but for the seasonable corrections also vouchsafed unto us, (whereby, though our senses are offended, our manners are bettered.*) Whatever proceeds from good purpose, and tends to a happy end, that is

* Τὸν θεὸν ὁμοίως ἀνυμνεῖν χρὴ, καὶ κολάζοντα, καὶ ἀνιέντα κολάσεως· ἀμφότερα γὰρ κηδεμονίας, ἀμφότερα ἀγαθότητος, &c.—Chrysost. in Psal. cxlviii.

graciously designed, and effectually conduces to our good, is a fit subject of thanksgiving; and such may all adversities prove unto us. They proceed usually from love and kind intention toward us; for 'whom God loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;' and 'I know, O Lord,' saith David, 'that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me:' 'in faithfulness,' that is, with a sincere intention of doing me good.

God thoroughly knows our constitution, what is noxious to our health, and what may remedy our distempers; and therefore accordingly disposeth to us

——pro jucundis aptissima quæque——;

instead of pleasant honey, he sometimes prescribes wholesome wormwood for us. We are ourselves greatly ignorant of what is conducible to our real good, and, were the choice of our condition wholly permitted to us, should make very foolish, very disadvantageous elections.

We should (be sure) all of us embrace a rich and plentiful estate; when as, God knows, that would make us slothful and luxurious, swell us with pride and haughty thoughts, incumber us with anxious cares, and expose us to dangerous temptations; would render us forgetful of ourselves, and neglectful of him. Therefore he wisely disposeth poverty unto us; poverty, the mother of sobriety, the nurse of industry, the mistress of wisdom; which will make us understand ourselves and our dependence on him, and force us to have recourse to his help. And is there not reason we should be thankful for the means by which we are delivered from those desperate mischiefs, and obtain these excellent advantages?

We should all (certainly) choose the favor and applause of men: but this, God also knows, would corrupt our minds with vain conceit, would intoxicate our fancies with spurious pleasure, would tempt us to ascribe immoderately to ourselves, and sacrilegiously to deprive God of his due honor. Therefore he advisedly suffers us to incur the disgrace and displeasure, the hatred and contempt of men; that so we may place our glory only in the hopes of his favor, and may pursue more earnestly

the purer delights of a good conscience. And doth not this part of divine providence highly merit our thanks?

We would all climb into high places, not considering the precipices on which they stand, nor the vertiginousness of our own brains: but God keeps us safe in the humble valleys, allotting to us employments which we are more capable to manage.

We should perhaps insolently abuse power, were it committed to us: we should employ great parts on unwieldy projects, as many do, to the disturbance of others, and their own ruin: vast knowlege would cause us to overvalue ourselves and contemn others: enjoying continual health, we should not perceive the benefit thereof, nor be mindful of him that gave it. A suitable mediocrity therefore of these things the divine goodness allotteth unto us, that we may neither starve for want, nor surfeit with plenty.

In fine, the advantages arising from afflictions are so many, and so great, that (had I time, and were it seasonable to insist largely on this subject) it were easy to demonstrate that we have great reason, not only to be contented with, but to rejoice in, and to be very thankful for, all the crosses and vexations we meet with: to receive them cheerfully at God's hand, as the medicines of our soul, and the condiments of our fortune; as the arguments of his goodwill and the instruments of virtue; as solid grounds of hope, and comfortable presages of future joy unto us.

6. Lastly, we are obliged to thank God, not only for corporeal and temporal benefits, but also (and that principally) for spiritual and eternal blessings. We are apt, as to desire more vehemently, to rejoice more heartily in the fruition, and more passionately to bewail the loss of temporal good things; so more sincerely and seriously to express our gratitude for the reception of them, than for others relating to our spiritual good, to our everlasting welfare. Wherein we misjudge and misbehave ourselves extremely. For, as much as the reasonable soul (that goodly image of the divine essence, breathed from the mouth of God) doth in dignity of nature, and purity of substance, excel this feculent lump of organised clay, our body; as the blissful ravishments of spirit surpass the dull satisfactions

of sense; as the bottomless depth of eternity exceeds that shallow surface of time, which terminates this transitory life; in such proportion should our appetite unto, our complacence in, our gratitude for spiritual blessings transcend the affections (respectively) engaged about these corporeal accommodations.

Consider that injunction of our Saviour to his disciples: 'In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.' 'Rejoice not;' that is, be not at all affected with this (although in itself very rare accomplishment, eminent privilege, glorious power of working that indeed greatest of miracles, subjecting devils; that is, baffling the shrewdest craft, and subduing the strongest force in nature) in comparison of that delight, which the consideration of the divine favor, in order to your eternal felicity, doth afford.

We are, it is true, greatly indebted to God for our creation, for that he hath extracted us from nothing, and placed us in so lofty a rank among his creatures; for the excellent faculties of soul and body, wherewith he hath endued us; and for many most admirable prerogatives of our outward estate: but much more for our redemption, and the wonderful circumstances of unexpressible love and grace therein declared; for his descending to a conjunction with our nature, and elevating us to a participation of his; for dignifying us with more illustrious titles, and instating us in a sure capacity of a much superior happiness. Our daily food deserves well a grace to be said before and after it: but how much more that constant provision of heavenly manna, the evangelical verity; those savory delicacies of devotion, whereby our souls are nourished to eternal life? It is a laudable custom, when we are demanded concerning our health, to answer, 'well, I thank God;' but much more reason have we to say so, if our conscience can attest concerning that sound constitution of mind whereby we are disposed vigorously to perform those virtuous functions, due from reasonable nature, and conformable to the divine law. If for the prosperous success of our worldly attempts; for avoiding dangers, that threatened corporal pain and damage to us; for defeating the adversaries of our secular quiet, we make *Te Deum lauda-*

mus our ἐπινίκιον, (our song for victory;) how much more for the happy progress of our spiritual affairs, (affairs of incomparably highest consequence;) for escaping those dreadful hazards of utter ruin, of endless torture; for vanquishing sin and hell, those irreconcileable enemies to our everlasting peace; are we obliged to utter triumphal anthems of joy and thankfulness!

This is the order observed by the psalmist: inciting his soul to 'bless God' for 'all his benefits,' he begins with the consideration of God's mercy in pardoning his sins; then proceeds to his goodness in bestowing temporal favors. 'Who forgiveth all thy sins,' leads the van; 'who satisfieth thy mouth with good things,' brings up the rear in the enumeration and acknowlegement of God's benefits. That our minds are illustrated with the knowlege of God and his glorious attributes of Christ and his blessed gospel, of that straight path which conducteth to true happiness; that by divine assistance we are enabled to elude the allurements, to withstand the violences of temptation, to assuage immoderate desires, to bridle exorbitant passions, to correct vicious inclinations of mind; requires more our hearty thanks, than for that we were able by our natural wit to penetrate the abstrusest mysteries, or to subjugate empires by our bodily strength. The forgiveness of our sins doth more oblige us to a grateful acknowlegement of the divine goodness, than should God enrich us with all the treasures contained in the bowels of the earth, or bottom of the ocean. One glimpse of his favorable countenance should more inflame our affections, than being invested with all the imaginable splendor of worldly glory.

Of these inestimable benefits, and all the advantageous circumstances wherewith they are attended, we ought to maintain in our hearts constant resentments; to excite our thankfulness, to kindle our love, to quicken our obedience, by the frequent contemplation of them.

Thus have I (though, I confess, much more slightly than so worthy a subject did require) prosecuted the several particulars observable in these words. I should conclude with certain inducements persuasive to the practice of this duty; whereof I

have in the tenor both of the former and present discourse insinuated divers, and could propound many more: but (in compliance with the time) I shall content myself briefly to consider only these three very obvious ones.

I. First, therefore, we may consider that there is no disposition whatever more deeply radicated in the original constitution of all souls endued with any kind of perception or passion, than being sensible of benefits received; being kindly affected with love and respect toward them that exhibit them; being ready with suitable expressions to acknowlege them, and to endeavor competent recompenses for them. The worst of men, the most devoid of all not only piety, but humanity and common ingenuity, the most barbarous and most wicked, (whom neither sense of equity nor respect to law, no promise of reward or fear of vengeance, can anywise engage to do things just and fitting, or restrain from enormous actions,) retain notwithstanding something of this natural inclination, and are usually sensible of good turns done unto them. Experience teaches us thus much; and so doth that sure oracle of our Saviour: 'If,' saith he, 'ye do good to those who do good to you, what thanks is it? for even sinners (that is, men of apparently lewd and dissolute conversation) do the same.'

Yea even beasts, and those not only the most gentle and sociable of them, (the officious dog, the tractable horse, the docile elephant,) but the wildest also and fiercest of them, (the untameable lion, the cruel tiger and ravenous bear, as stories tell us, and experience attests,) bear some kindness, show some grateful affection to those that provide for them.

Neither wild beasts only, but even inanimate creatures seem not altogether insensible of benefits, and lively represent unto us a natural abhorrence of ingratitude. The rivers openly discharge into the sea those waters, which by indiscernible conduits they derived thence; the heavens remit in bountiful showers what from the earth they had exhaled in vapor; and the earth by a fruitful increase repays the culture bestowed thereon; if not, (as the Apostle to the Hebrews doth pronounce,) it deserves 'cursing' and 'reprobation.' So monstrous a thing, and universally abominable to nature, is all in-

gratitude. And how execrable a prodigy is it then toward God, from whom alone we receive whatever we enjoy, whatever we can expect of good?

II. The second obligation to this duty is most just and equal. For, (as he* said well,) *beneficium qui dare nescit, injuste petit;* 'He unjustly requires (much more unjustly receives) a benefit, who is not minded to requite it.' In all reason we are indebted for what is freely given, as well as for what is lent unto us. For the freeness of the giver, his not exacting security, nor expressing conditions of return, doth not diminish, but rather increase the debt. He that gives, indeed, according to human (or political) law, (which, in order to preservation of public peace, requires only a punctual performance of contracts,) transfers his right, and alienates his possession: but according to that more noble and perfect rule of ingenuity, (the law which God and angels and good men chiefly observe and govern themselves by,) what is given is but committed to the faith, deposited in the hand, treasured up in the custody of him that receives it: and what more palpable iniquity is there, than to betray the trust, or to detain the pledge, not of some inconsiderable trifle, but of inestimable good-will? *Excepta Macedonum gente,* saith Seneca, *non est ulla data adversus ingratum actio:* 'In no nation (excepting the Macedonians) an action could be preferred against ingrateful persons, as so.' (Though Xenophon, no mean author, reports, that among the Persians also there were judgments assigned, and punishments appointed for ingratitude.) However, in the court of heaven, and at the tribunal of conscience, no offender is more constantly arraigned, none more surely condemned, none more severely punished than the ingrateful man.

Since therefore we have received all from the divine bounty; if God should in requital exact that we sacrifice our lives to the testimony of his truth; that we employ our utmost pains, expend our whole estate, adventure our health, and prostitute all our earthly contents to his service; since he did but revoke his own, it were great injustice to refuse compliance with his

* Laberius.

demands: how much more, when he only expects from us and requires some few acknowlegements of our obligation to him, some little portions of our substance for the relief of them that need, some easy observances of his most reasonable commands?

III. Thirdly, this is a most sweet and delightful duty. 'Praise the Lord,' saith the most experienced psalmist, 'for the Lord is good; sing praises to his name, for it is pleasant:' and otherwhere, 'Praise the Lord, for it is good to sing praises to our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely.' The performance of this duty, as it especially proceeds from good humor and a cheerful disposition of mind; so it feeds and foments them; both root and fruit thereof are hugely sweet and sapid. Whence St. James; 'If any man be afflicted, let him pray; is any merry, let him sing psalms.' (Psalms, the proper matter of which is praise and thanksgiving.)

Other duties of devotion have something laborious in them, something disgustful to our sense. Prayer minds us of our wants and imperfections; confession induces a sad remembrance of our misdeeds and bad deserts: but thanksgiving includes nothing uneasy or unpleasant; nothing but the memory and sense of exceeding goodness.

All love is sweet; but that especially which arises, not from a bare apprehension only of the object's worth and dignity, but from a feeling of its singular beneficence and usefulness unto us. And what thought can enter into the heart of man more comfortable and delicious than this, that the great Master of all things, the most wise and mighty King of heaven and earth, hath entertained a gracious regard, hath expressed a real kindness towards us? That we are in capacity to honor, to please, to present an acceptable sacrifice to him, who can render us perfectly happy? That we are admitted to the practice of that wherein the supreme joy of paradise, and the perfection of angelical bliss consists? For praise and thanksgiving are the most delectable business of heaven; and God grant they may be our greatest delight, our most frequent employment on earth.

To these I might add such farther considerations: That this

duty is of all most acceptable to God, and most profitable to us. That gratitude for benefits procures more, disposing God to bestow, and qualifying us to receive them. That the serious performance of this duty efficaciously promotes and facilitates the practice of other duties; since the more we are sensible of our obligations to God, the more ready we shall be to please him, by obedience to his commandments. What St. Chrysostom saith of prayer, It is impossible that he, who with competent promptitude of mind doth constantly apply himself thereto, should ever sin, is most especially true of this part of devotion: for how can we at the same time be sensible of God's goodness to us, and willingly offend him? That the memory of past benefits, and sense of present, confirms our faith, and nourishes our hope of future. That the circumstances of the divine beneficence mightily strengthen the obligation to this duty; especially his absolute freeness in giving, and our total unworthiness to receive; our very ingratitude itself affording strong inducements to gratitude. That giving thanks hath *de facto* been always the principal part of all religion, (whether instituted by divine command, or prompted by natural reason, or propagated by general tradition;) the Ethnic devotion consisting (as it were totally) in the praise of their gods, and acknowlegement of their benefits; the Jewish more than half in eucharistical oblations, and in solemn commemorations of providential favors; and that of the ancient Christians so far forth, that bye-standers could hardly discern any other thing in their religious practice, than that they sang hymns to Christ, and by mutual sacraments obliged themselves to abstain from all villainy. But I will rather wholly omit the prosecution of these pregnant arguments, than be farther offensive to your patience.

Now the blessed Fountain of all goodness and mercy inspire our hearts with his heavenly grace, and thereby enable us rightly to apprehend, diligently to consider, faithfully to remember, worthily to esteem, to be heartily affected with, to render all due acknowlegement, praise, love, and thankful

* Vid. diviniss. Chrys. locum tom. v. p. 76.

obedience for all his (infinitely great and innumerable many) favors, mercies, and benefits freely conferred on us: and let us say with David, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things: and blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory.' 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen.'

SUMMARY OF SERMON X.

I TIMOTHY, CHAP. II.—VERSES 1. 2.

FROM St. Paul's observations in the preceding chapter, and in that from which the text is taken, we may collect two particulars. 1. That the making of *prayers for kings* is a Christian duty of great importance. 2. That it is incumbent on the pastors of the church to take especial care that this duty be performed both publicly in their congregations, and privately in the retirement of each Christian. The first of these particulars pressed by several considerations.

I. The Apostle exhorts Christians to pray for kings with all sorts of prayer; with *deprecations* for averting evils from them, with *petitions* for obtaining good things for them, with *occasional intercessions* for needful gifts and graces to be collated on them: to all this we are obliged on divers accounts. 1. Common charity should dispose us to pray for kings. This Christian disposition inclines to universal benevolence, according to that apostolical precept, *as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men:* it consequently will incline us to pray for all men. 2. This is the only way that most of us may have to benefit those who are in so high a station above us, and out of the reach of private beneficence. 3. We are bound to pray for kings from charity to the public; because their good is a general good, and the communities of men, both church and state, are greatly concerned in the blessings by prayer derived on them: this point illustrated by many arguments and examples

from holy Scripture: our obligation to love our country enlarged on, as a very noble piece of charity: 4. consequently our own interest, and charity to ourselves should dispose us to pray for our prince. We are nearly concerned in his welfare, as parts of the public; we cannot but partake of his good, we cannot but suffer with him: consideration on this point suggested by holy Scripture. 5. We should consider that subjects are obliged in gratitude, equity, and justice to perform this duty; for kings are most nearly related and allied to us by the most sacred bonds; being constituted by God, in his own room, parents and guardians of their country, being also avowed and accepted for such by solemn vows and most holy sacraments of allegiance; whence unto them we owe a humble piety and dutiful observance; which cannot be better expressed than in our heartiest prayers for their welfare: this point enlarged on. 6. Whereas we are by divine command frequently enjoined to fear and reverence, to honor and obey kings, we should look on prayer for them as a principal branch, and the neglect thereof as a notable breach of those duties; for as to honor, nothing can so demonstrate it as the wishing them well in our hearts, and thence framing addresses to the divine majesty for their welfare: and as for obedience, prayer for princes is clearly an instance thereof, since it may be supposed that all princes do require it from their subjects. 7. The praying for them is a service peculiarly honorable, and very acceptable to God, which he will interpret as a great respect done to himself; for thereby we honor his image and character in them. 8. Wisdom inclines us to place our devotion where it will be most needful and useful. Their office is most high and hard to discharge well or happily, wherefore they need extraordinary supplies from the divine bounty: their affairs are of greatest weight and importance; their deliberations are about matters of dark and uncertain consequence; their enterprises are commonly such as are of greatest difficulty;

they are most exposed to dangers and disasters; they have the natural infirmities of other men, and are far beyond them subject to temptations: wherefore if we love them, our country, or ourselves, if we regard the interests of truth, of piety, or the common good, we shall not fail to pray that God will afford them needful assistance in the administration of their high office. 9. Whereas God has declared that he hath a special regard to princes, as his representatives, the *ministers of his kingdom*, and this for the benefit of mankind, which is mainly concerned in their welfare, on that account our prayers for them are the more required; for it is a method of God, not to dispense special blessings without particular conditions, and the concurrence of our duty in observing his commands. 10. To engage and encourage us in this practice we may farther consider that such prayers duly offered with fervency and constancy, sincerity and zeal, do never want effect; which, if it be not always discernible, is certainly real, if not as perfect as we desire, as competent as the condition of things will bear: this subject enlarged on: the general efficacy of prayer considered: our reasonable hopes in the present instance. 11. Another general consideration is, that prayer is the only allowable way of redressing our case, if we suffer by or for princes: this point enlarged on: precepts of St. Paul considered: God's providence stated as the only sure ground of our confidence or hope for the preservation of church and state. 12. Seeing then that there are so many good arguments and motives for inducing us to pray for kings, it is no wonder that, to back them, we may also allege the continual practice of the church, in all times performing this duty in its most sacred offices. Exhortation of St. Paul on this head: practice of the church in this respect, as related by Tertullian: also as related by St. Chrysostom: prayers for the emperors were inserted in the Greek liturgies: reasons why the offices of the Romish church, and of those which truckled to it in latter times, were defective in

this point of service: ample manner in which our own church performs this duty.

Besides these general inducements to this duty, there are particular reasons which inforce it in the present season. Times of danger and distress, of guilt and deserved wrath, are most seasonable for recourse to the divine help and mercy in prayer: the gloomy days, the dissensions and animosities of parties, the universal licentiousness of all ranks, the general contempt of religious duties, and the heavy judgments that may be expected, dilated on. This first duty, *prayer for kings*, has been thus largely insisted on, by reason of its seasonableness to the present times.

II. The other, that of *thanksgiving*, need only be lightly touched. For,

1. As to general inducements, they are the same, or very like to those which apply to prayer; it being plain, that whatever we are concerned to pray for, when we want it, for that we are bound to thank God, when he vouchsafes to bestow it. 2. As for particular motives, no one can be ignorant or insensible of the grand benefits by the divine goodness bestowed on the king and on the nation, which this day call for grateful acknowlegement. The recital therefore of trite stories and obvious reasons being omitted, all are requested to practise this duty, and to join in the concluding acclamations of praise and thanksgiving to God.

SERMON X.

ON THE KING'S HAPPY RETURN.

I TIMOTHY, CHAP. II.—VERSES 1. 2.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority.

SAINT PAUL in his preceding discourse having insinuated directions to his scholar and spiritual son, Timothy, concerning the discharge of his office, of instructing men in their duty according to the evangelical doctrine; (the main design whereof he teacheth to consist, not (as some men conceited) in fond stories, or 'vain speculations,' but in practice of substantial duties, holding a 'sincere faith,' maintaining a 'good conscience,' performing offices of 'pure' and 'hearty charity;') in pursuance of such general duty, and as a principal instance thereof, he doth here 'first of all exhort,' or, doth 'exhort that first of all' all kinds of devotion should be offered to God, as for all men generally, so particularly for kings and magistrates. From whence we may collect two particulars. 1. That the making of 'prayers for kings' is a Christian duty of great importance. (St. Paul judging fit to exhort thereto πρῶτον πάντων, 'before all other things;' or to 'exhort that before all things' it should be performed.) 2. That it is incumbent on the pastors of the church (such as St. Timothy was) to take special care that this duty should be performed in the church; both publicly in the congregations, and privately in the retirements of each Christian: according to what the Apos-

tle, after the proposing divers enforcements of this duty, subsumeth in the eighth verse; 'I will therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting.'

The first of these particulars, that it is a duty of great importance 'to pray for kings,' I shall insist on: it being indeed now very fit and seasonable to urge the practice of it, when it is perhaps commonly not much considered, or not well observed; and when there is most need of it, in regard to the effects and consequences which may proceed from the conscionable discharge of it.

My endeavor therefore shall be to press it by divers considerations, discovering our obligation thereto, and serving to induce us to its observance: some whereof shall be general, or common to all times: some particular, or suitable to the present circumstances of things.

I. The Apostle exhorteth Christians to 'pray for kings' with all sorts of prayer: with δεήσεις, or 'deprecations,' for averting evils from them; with προσευχαὶ, or 'petitions,' for obtaining good things to them; with ἐντεύξεις, or 'occasional intercessions,' for needful gifts and graces to be collated on them: as, after St. Austin, interpreters, in expounding St. Paul's words, commonly distinguish; how accurately, I shall not discuss: it sufficing, that assuredly the Apostle meaneth, under this variety of expression, to comprehend all kinds of prayer. And to this I say we are obliged on divers accounts.

1. Common charity should dispose us to pray for kings. This Christian disposition inclineth to universal benevolence and beneficence; according to that apostolical precept, 'as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men:' it consequently will excite us to pray for all men; seeing this is a way of exerting good-will, and exercising beneficence, which any man at any time, if he hath the will and heart, may have opportunity and ability to pursue.

No man indeed otherwise can benefit all: few men otherwise can benefit many: some men otherwise can benefit none: but in this way any man is able to benefit all, or unconfinedly to oblige mankind, deriving on any somewhat of God's immense beneficence. By performing this good office, at the expense of

a few good wishes addressed to the sovereign Goodness, the poorest may prove benefactors to the richest, the meanest to the highest, the weakest to the mightiest of men: so we may benefit even those who are most remote from us, most strangers and quite unknown to us. Our prayers can reach the utmost ends of the earth; and by them our charity may embrace all the world.

And from them surely kings must not be excluded. For if, because all men are our fellow-creatures, and brethren by the same heavenly Father: because all men are allied to us by cognation and similitude of nature; because all men are the objects of God's particular favor and care: if, because all men are partakers of the common redemption, by the undertakings of him who is the common Mediator and Saviour of all men; and because all men, according to the gracious intent and desire of God, are designed for a consortship in the same blessed inheritance; (which inforcements St. Paul in the context doth intimate:) if, in fine, because all men do need prayers, and are capable of benefit from them, we should be charitably disposed to pray for them: then must we also pray for kings, who, even in their personal capacity, as men, do share in all those conditions. Thus may we conceive St. Paul here to argue: 'for all men,' saith he, 'for kings;' that is, consequently 'for kings,' or particularly 'for kings;' to pray for whom, at least no less than for other men, universal charity should dispose us.

Indeed, even on this account we may say, especially 'for kings;' the law of general charity with peculiar advantage being applicable to them: for that law commonly is expressed with reference to our neighbor, that is, to persons with whom we have to do, who come under our particular notice, who by any intercourse are approximated to us; and such are kings especially. For whereas the greatest part of men (by reason of their distance from us, from the obscurity of their condition, or for want of opportunity to converse with them) must needs slip beside us, so that we cannot employ any distinct thought or affection toward them: it is not so with kings, who by their eminent and illustrious station become very observable by us; with whom we have frequent transactions and mutual concerns: who therefore in the strictest acception are our neigh-

bors, whom we are charged to love as ourselves; to whom consequently we must perform this most charitable office of praying for them.

2. To impress which consideration, we may reflect that commonly we have only this way granted us of exercising our charity toward princes; they being situated aloft above the reach of private beneficence:* so that we cannot enrich them, or relieve them by our alms; we cannot help to exalt or prefer them to a better state; we can hardly come to impart good advice, seasonable consolation, or wholesome reproof to them; we cannot profit or please them by familiar conversation. For as in divers other respects they resemble the Divinity; so in this they are like it, that we may say to them, as the psalmist to God, 'thou art my Lord; my goodness extendeth not to thee.' Yet this case may be reserved, wherein the poorest soul may benefit the greatest prince, imparting the richest and choicest goods to him: he may be indebted for his safety, for the prosperity of his affairs, for God's mercy and favor toward him, to the prayers of his meanest vassal. And thus to oblige princes, methinks, we should be very desirous; we should be glad to use such an advantage, we should be ambitious of such an honor.

3. We are bound to pray for kings out of charity to the public; because their good is a general good, and the communities of men (both church and state) are greatly concerned in the blessings by prayer derived on them.

The safety of a prince is a great part of the common welfare; the commonwealth, as it were, living and breathing in him: his fall, like that of a tall cedar, (to which he is compared,) shaking the earth and discomposing the state; putting things out of course, and drawing them into new channels; translating the administration of affairs into untried hands, and an uncertain condition. Hence, 'let the king live,' (which our translators render, 'God save the king,') was an usual form

* Privatorum ista copia est, inter se esse munificos.—Auson. ad Gratian.

Absit, Auguste, et istud sancta divinitas omen avertat, ut tu a quoquam mortalium expectes vicem beneficii.—Mamerc. ad Julian.

of salutation or prayer: and, 'O king live for ever,' was a customary address to princes, whereto the best men did conform, even in application to none of the best princes; as Nehemiah to king Artaxerxes, and Daniel to king Darius. Hence not only good king David is called 'the light of Israel;' ('Thou shalt not,' said Abishai, 'any more go out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel;') but even the wicked and perverse king Zedekiah is by the prophet Jeremy himself (who had been so misused by him) styled 'the breath of our nostrils.' ('The breath,' saith he, 'of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits.') Hence not only the fall of good king Josiah was so grievously lamented; but a solemn mourning was due to that of Saul; and, 'Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep for Saul,' was a strain becoming the mouth of his great successor king David. Hence the primitive Christians, who could not be constrained to swear by the genius of Cæsar, did not yet, in compliance with the usual practice, scruple to swear by their *health* or *safety*:* that is, to express their wishing it, with appeal to God's testimony of their sincerity therein; as Joseph may be conceived to have sworn 'by the life of Pharaoh.' Hence well might the people tell king David, 'Thou art worth ten thousand of us;' seeing the public was so much interested in his safety, and had suffered more in the loss of him, than if a myriad of others had miscarried.

This honor likewise of a prince is the glory of his people; seeing it is founded on qualities or deeds tending to their advantage; seeing it can hardly be supposed that he should acquire honor without their aid and concurrence, or that he should retain it without their support and their satisfaction. And as the chief grace and beauty of a body is in the head, and the fairest ornaments of the whole are placed there; so is any commonwealth most dignified and beautified by the reputation of its prince.

The wealth and power of a prince are the supports and securities of a state; he thereby being enabled to uphold and defend its safety, its order, its peace; to protect his people

* Sed et juramus, sicut non per genios Cæsarum, ita per salutem eorum, quæ est augustior omnibus geniis.—Tert. Apol. cap. xxxii.

from foreign injuries and invasions; to secure them from intestine broils and factions; to repress outrages and oppressions annoying them.

The prosperity of a prince is inseparable from the prosperity of his people; they ever partaking of his fortunes, and thriving or suffering with him. For as when the sun shineth brightly, there is a clear day, and fair weather over the world; so when a prince is not overclouded with adversity or disastrous occurrences, the public state must be serene, and a pleasant state of things will appear. Then is the ship in a good condition, when the pilot in open sea, with full sails and a brisk gale, cheerfully steereth on toward his designed port.

Especially the piety and goodness of a prince is of vast consequence, and yieldeth infinite benefit to his country. For, *vita principis censura est;* the life of a prince is a calling of other men's lives to an account. His example hath an unspeakable influence on the manners of his people, who are apt in all his garb and every fashion to imitate him.* His practice is more powerful than his commands, and often doth control them. His authority hath the great stroke in encouraging virtue, and checking vice, if it bendeth that way; the dispensation of honors and rewards, with the infliction of ignominies and corrections, being in his hand, and passing from it according to his inclinations. His power is the shield of innocence, the fence of right, the shelter of weakness and simplicity against violences and frauds. His very look (a smile or a frown of his countenance) is sufficient to advance goodness, and suppress wickedness; according to that of Solomon, 'A king sitting in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.' His goodness pleasing God procureth his favor, and therewith deduceth from heaven all kinds of blessings on his

* Flexibiles in quamcunque partem ducimur a principe, atque, ut ita dicam, sequaces sumus. Huic enim chari, huic probati esse cupimus; quod frustra speraverint dissimiles. Eoque obsequii continuatione pervenimus, ut prope omnes homines unius moribus vivamus.—Plin. Paneg.

Vita principis censura est, eaque perpetua; ad hanc dirigimur, ad hanc convertimur; nec tam imperio nobis opus est quam exemplo.—Ibid.

people. And if those politic aphorisms of the wise man be true, that 'righteousness exalteth a nation and establisheth a throne;' that 'when it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth;' and 'the same by the blessing of the upright is exalted:' then on his inclinations to virtue the advancement and stability of public welfare do mainly depend. So, for instance, how did piety florish in the times of David, who loved, favored, and practised it! and what abundance of prosperity did attend it! What showers of blessings (what peace, what wealth, what credit and glory) did God then pour down on Israel! How did the goodness of that prince transmit favors and mercies on his country till a long time after his decease! How often did God profess 'for his servant David's sake' to preserve Judah from destruction; so that even in the days of Hezekiah, when the king of Assyria did invade that country, God by the mouth of Isaiah declared, 'I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.'

We may indeed observe that, according to the representation of things in holy Scripture, there is a kind of moral connexion, or a communication of merit and guilt, between prince and people; so that mutually each of them is rewarded for the virtues, each is punished for the vices of the other. As for the iniquities of a people, God withdraweth from their prince the free communications of his grace and of his favor, (suffering him to incur sin, or to fall into misfortune; which was the case of that incomparably good king Josiah, and hath been the fate of divers excellent princes, whom God hath snatched away from people unworthy of them, or involved with such a people in common calamities; according to the rule propounded in the law, of God's dealing with the Israelites in the case of their disobedience; and according to that of Samuel, 'If ye shall do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king:') so reciprocally, for the misdemeanors of princes, (or in them, and by them,) God doth chastise their people. For what confusions in Israel did the offences of Solomon create! What mischiefs did issue thereon from Jeroboam's wicked behavior! How did the sins of Manasseh stick to his country, since that, even after that notable reformation wrought by Josiah, it is said, 'Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness

of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations wherewith Manasseh had provoked him!' And how sorely, by a tedious three years famine, did God avenge Saul's cruelty toward the Gibeonites!

Nor are only the sins of bad princes affixed to people conspiring with them in impiety; for even of king Hezekiah it is said, 'But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath on him, and on Judah and Jerusalem.' So the pride and ingratitude of an excellent prince were avenged on his subjects. And when good king David (God averting his grace from him) did fall into that arrogant transgression of counting his forces, that, as Joab prudently foretold, became 'a cause of trespass to Israel;' and 'God,' saith the text, 'was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.'

David indeed seemed to apprehend some iniquity in this proceeding, expostulating thus, 'Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed: but as for these sheep, what have they done?' But God had no regard to his plea, nor returned any answer to it; for indeed God's wrath began with the people, and their king's sin was but a judgment executed on them; for 'the anger,' it is said, 'of the Lord was kindled against Israel,' (by their sin surely, which is the only incentive of divine wrath,) 'and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.'

So indeed it is that princes are bad, that they incur great errors, or commit notable trespasses, is commonly imputable to the fault of subjects; and is a just judgment by divine providence laid on them, as for other provocations, so especially for their want of devotion, and neglecting duly to pray for them. For if they constantly, with hearty sincerity and earnest fervency, would in their behalf sue to God, who 'fashioneth all the hearts of men,' who especially holdeth 'the hearts of kings in his hand, and turneth them whithersoever he will;' we reasonably might presume that God by his grace would direct them into the right way, and incline their hearts to goodness; that he would accomplish his own word in the prophet, 'I will

make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness:' that we might have occasion to pay thanksgivings like that of Ezra, 'Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, who hath put such things as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.'

We are apt to impute the ill management of things, and the bad success waiting on it, unto princes, being in appearance the immediate agents and instruments of it: but we commonly do therein mistake, not considering that ourselves are most guilty, and blameable for it: that it is an impious people which maketh an unhappy prince; that their offences do pervert his counsels, and blast his undertakings; that their profaneness and indevotion do incense God's displeasure, and cause him to desert princes, withdrawing his gracious conduct from them, and permitting them to be misled by temptation, by ill advice, by their own infirmities, lusts, and passions, into courses fit to punish a naughty people. So these were the causes of Moses's 'speaking unadvisedly with his lips,' and that 'it went ill with him for their sakes;' of Aaron's forming the molten calf; of David's numbering the people; of Josiah's unadvised enterprise against Pharaoh Neco; of Zedekiah's rebellion against the Assyrians, (notwithstanding the strong dissuasions of the prophet Jeremy;) concerning which it is said, 'for through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.'

Considering which things it is apparent that prayer for our prince is a great office of charity to the public; and that in praying for his safety, for his honor, for his wealth, for his prosperity, for his virtue, we do in effect pray for the same benefits respectively to our country; that in praying for his welfare, we do in consequence pray for the good of all our neighbors, our friends, our relations, our families; whose good is wrapped in his welfare, doth flow from it, doth hang on it.

We are bound, and it is a very noble piece of charity, to love our country, sincerely to desire and earnestly to further its happiness, and therefore to pray for it; according to the advice and practice of the psalmist: 'O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within

thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.' We are obliged more especially on the highest accounts, with dearest affection to love the church, (our heavenly commonwealth, the society of our spiritual brethren,) most ardently to tender its good, and seek its advantages; and therefore most urgently to sue for God's favor toward it; being ready to say after David, 'Do good, O God, in thy good pleasure to Sion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.' 'Arise, O Lord, and have mercy on Sion; for the time to favor her, yea the set time is come.' Now these duties we cannot more easily, more compendiously, or more effectually discharge, than by earnestly praying for our prince; seeing that if we do by our prayers procure God's favor to him, we do certainly draw it on the state, and the church. If God, moved by our devout importunities, shall please to guard his person from dangers, and to 'grant him a long life;' to endue his heart with grace, with the love and fear of himself, with a zeal of furthering public good, of favoring piety, of discountenancing sin; if God shall vouchsafe to inspire him with wisdom, and to guide his counsels, to bless his proceedings, and to crown his undertakings with good success: then assuredly we have much promoted the public interest; then infallibly, together with these, all other blessings shall descend on us, all good will flourish in our land. This was the ancient practice of Christians, and directed to this end. For 'we,' saith Lactantius to Constantine, 'with daily prayers do supplicate God, that he would first of all keep thee, whom he hath willed to be the keeper of things; then that he would inspire into thee a will, whereby thou mayest ever persevere in the love of God's name; which is salutary to all, both to thee for thy happiness, and to us for our quiet.'*

4. Wherefore consequently our own interest and charity to ourselves should dispose us to pray for our prince. We being nearly concerned in his welfare, as parts of the public, and as enjoying many private advantages thereby; we cannot but

* Cui nos quotidianis precibus supplicamus, ut te imprimis, quem rerum custodem voluit esse, custodiat; deinde inspiret tibi voluntatem, qua semper in amore divini nominis perseveres; quod est omnibus salutare, et tibi ad felicitatem, et nobis ad quietem.—Lact. vii. 26.

partake of his good, we cannot but suffer with him. We cannot live quietly, if our prince is disturbed; we cannot live happily, if he be unfortunate; we can hardly live virtuously, if divine grace do not incline him to favor us therein, or at least restrain him from hindering us. This is St. Paul's own consideration: 'I exhort you,' saith he, 'to make prayers for kings—that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.' On such an account God did command the Jews to pray for the welfare of that heathen state, under which they lived in captivity. 'And seek,' said he, 'the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.' And for the like cause the Christians of old deemed themselves bound to pray for the Gentile magistrates; according to that of Tertullian: 'We pray for you, because with you the empire is shaken; and the other members of it being shaken, assuredly even we, how far soever we may be thought from troubles, are found in some place of the fall.'* Farther,

5. Let us consider that subjects are obliged in gratitude and ingenuity, yea in equity and justice, to pray for their princes. For,

They are most nearly related to us, and allied by the most sacred bands; being constituted by God, in his own room, the parents and guardians of their country; being also avowed and accepted for such by solemn vows, and most holy sacraments of allegiance; whence unto them as such we owe an humble piety, a very respectful affection, a most dutiful observance;† the which we cannot better express or exercise, than in our heartiest prayers for their welfare.

* Vobiscum enim concutitur imperium: concussis etiam cæteris membris ejus, utique et nos, licet extranei a turbis æstimemur, in aliquo loco casus invenimur.—Tert. Apol. cap. xxxii.

† Quem sciens (Christianus) a Deo suo constitui, necesse est, ut et ipsum diligat, et revereatur, et honoret, et salvum velit.—Tert. ad Scap. ii.

Jurat per Deum, et per Christum, et per Spiritum S. et per majestatem imperatoris, quæ secundum Deum generi humano diligenda est, et colenda.—Veget. ii. 5.

They by God are destined to be the protectors of the church, the patrons of religion, the fosterers and cherishers of truth, of virtue, of piety: for of the church in the evangelical times it was prophesied, 'Kings shall be thy nursing fathers;' 'thou shalt suck the breasts of kings; kings shall minister to thee:' 'wherefore to them, not only as men and citizens, but peculiarly as Christians, we owe the highest duty; and consequently we must pay the best devotion for them.

To them we stand indebted for the greatest benefits of common life: they necessarily do take much care, they undergo great trouble, they are exposed to many hazards for our advantages; that 'under their shadow' we may enjoy safety and quiet, we may reap the fruits of our industry, we may possess the comforts and conveniences of our life, with security from rapine, from contention, from solicitude, from the continual fears of wrong and outrage.

To their industry and vigilancy under God we owe the fair administration of justice, the protection of right and innocence, the preservation of order and peace, the encouragement of goodness, and correction of wickedness: for they, as the Apostle telleth us, 'are God's ministers, attending continually on these very things.' They indeed so attend as to deny themselves, and so forego much of their own ease, their pleasure, their satisfaction; being frequently perplexed with cares, continually enslaved to business, and subject to various inconveniences, rendering their life to considerate spectators very little desirable.

As therefore, according to our Lord's observation, they are usually styled benefactors, so they really are; even the worst of them (such as Claudius, or Nero, of whom our Apostles speak) in considerable measure; at least in comparison of anarchy, and considering the mischiefs issuing from want of government. Οὐ κολακεία ἐστὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα· 'The matter is not flattery;' (saith St. Chrysostom,* himself of all men farthest from a flatterer;) 'but according to the reason of the case' we must esteem ourselves much obliged to them for the pains they sustain in our behalf, and for the benefits we receive from them.

* Chrys. in 1 Tim. ii. 1.

For he indeed must be a very bad governor, to whom that speech of the orator Tertullus may not without glozing be accommodated: 'Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.'

However, what Seneca saith of philosophers, that 'they of all men are most obliged, and most grateful to kings and magistrates, because from their care they enjoy the leisure, quiet, and security of contemplating and practising the best things; on which account,' saith he, 'they could not but reverence the authors of so great a good as parents;'* that is, or should be, far more true of Christians. 'That leisure (to use his words) which is spent with God, and which rendereth us like to God;'† the liberty of studying divine truth, and of serving God with security and quiet; are inestimable benefits, for the which they are indebted to the protection of magistrates: therefore in all reason a grateful retribution of good will, and of all good offices, particularly of our prayers, is to be paid to them. 'Is it not very absurd,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'that they should labor and venture for us, and we not pray for them?'

6. Whereas we are by divine command frequently enjoined to fear and reverence, to honor, to obey kings; we should look on prayer for them as a principal branch, and the neglect thereof as a notable breach of those duties. For,

As to honor and reverence, it is plain that no exterior signification, in ceremonious unveiling or cringing to them, can so demonstrate it, as doth the wishing them well in our hearts, and from thence framing particular addresses to the divine Majesty for their welfare. Than which practice there can be no surer argument that we hold them in great account and consideration. And how indeed can we much honor them, for

* Nulli adversus magistratus ac reges gratiores sunt; nec immerito, nullis enim plus præstant, quam quibus frui tranquillo otio licet. Itaque hi quibus ad propositum bene vivendi confert securitas publica, necesse est auctorem hujus boni ut parentem colant.—Sen. Ep. 73.

† Quanti æstimamus hoc otium, quod inter Deos agitur, quod Deos facit?—Ibid.

whom we do not vouchsafe so much as to offer our good wishes, or to mention them in our intercessions unto him, who requireth us to make them for all men, and particularly for those for whom we are concerned? Doth not this omission evidently place them in the lowest rank, beneath the meanest of our friends and relations? doth it not imply a very slender regard had to them?

And as for obedience, prayer for princes is clearly an instance thereof; seeing it may be supposed that all princes do require it from their subjects. Not only Christian princes, who believe God the sole dispenser of all good things, and the great efficacy of devotion in procuring them from him, may be deemed to exact this beneficial office from us; but even heathens and infidels, from their dim notion of a sovereign Providence, (which hath ever been common in the world,) have made an account of this practice; as we may see by that decree of the Persian king in Ezra, charging his officers to furnish the Jewish elders with sacrifices, 'that,' said he, 'they may offer sacrifices of sweet savor unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and of his sons.' And that such was the practice of the Romans even in their heathenish state, doth appear from those words of Pliny: "we have," saith he, "been wont to make vows for the eternity of the empire, and for the welfare of the citizens; yea, for the welfare of the princes, and in their behalf for the eternity of the empire."*

Not only pious princes with a serious desire will expect this duty from us; but even profane ones in policy will demand it, as a decent testimony of respect to them, and a proper means of upholding their state; that they may seem to have place in the most serious regards and solemn performances of their subjects. So that to neglect this duty is ever a violation of our due obedience, and a kind of disloyalty to them. Again,

7. The praying for princes is a service peculiarly honorable, and very acceptable to God; which he will interpret as a great

* Nuncupare vota et pro æternitate imperii, et pro salute civium, imo pro salute principum, ac propter illos pro æternitate imperii, solebamus.—Plin. Paneg.

respect done to himself; for that thereby we honor his image and character in them, yielding in his presence this special respect to them as his representatives; for that thereby we avow his government of the world by them as his ministers and deputies; for that thereby we acknowlege all power derived from him, and depending on his pleasure; we ascribe to him an authority paramount above all earthly potentates; we imply our persuasion that he alone is absolute sovereign of the world, 'the King of kings, and Lord of lords,' so that princes are nothing otherwise than in subordination to him, can do nothing without his succor, do owe to him all their power, their safety, their prosperity, and welfare;* for that, in fine, thereby disclaiming all other confidences 'in any son of man,' we signify our intire submission to God's will, and sole confidence in his providence. This service therefore is a very grateful kind of adoring our almighty Lord; and as such St. Paul recommendeth it in the words immediately subjoined to our text, 'For this,' saith he, 'is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.'

8. Let us consider that whereas wisdom, guiding our piety and charity, will especially incline us to place our devotion there where it will be most needful and useful; we therefore chiefly must pray for kings because they do most need our prayers.

The office is most high, and hard to discharge well or happily; wherefore they need extraordinary supplies of gifts and graces from the divine bounty.

Their affairs are of greatest weight and importance, requiring answerable skill and strength to steer and wield them: wherefore they need from the fountain of wisdom and power special communications of light, of courage, of ability, to conduct, to support, to fortify them in their managements; they need that God should 'uphold them' πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ, with 'that princely spirit,' for which king David prayed.

They often are to deliberate about matters of dark and uncertain consequence: they are to judge in cases of dubious and

* Temperans majestatem Cæsaris infra Deum, magis illum commendo Deo.—Tert. Apol. cap. xxxiii.

intricate nature ; the which to resolve prudently, or to determine uprightly, no human wisdom sufficiently can enable : wherefore they need 'the spirit of counsel,' and 'the spirit of judgment,' from the sole dispenser of them, the great 'Counsellor' and most 'righteous Judge.' The wisest and ablest of them hath reason to pray with Solomon, 'Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad : for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?' That so what the wise man saith may be verified, 'A divine sentence is in the lips of the king, his mouth transgresseth not in judgment :' and that of the wise woman, 'As an angel of God, so is my lord the king, to discern good and bad.'

They commonly are engaged in enterprises of greatest difficulty, insuperable by the might or industry of man ; in regard to which we may say with Hannah, 'by strength shall no man prevail ;' with the preacher, 'the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong ;' with the psalmist, 'there is no king saved by the multitude of an host :' wherefore they need aid and succor from the Almighty, to carry them through, and bless their designs with success.

They are most exposed to dangers and disasters ; (standing like high towers, most obnoxious to the winds and tempests of fortune ;) having usually many envious ill-willers, many disaffected malecontents, many both open enemies and close insidiators ; from whose force or treachery no human providence can sufficiently guard them : they do therefore need the protection of the ever-vigilant 'Keeper of Israel' to secure them : for, 'except the Lord keepeth the city, the watchman waketh but in vain ;' except the Lord preserve the king, his guards, his armies surround him to no purpose.

They have the natural infirmities of other men, and far beyond other men are subject to external temptations. The malicious spirit (as in the case of Job, of David, of Ahab, of Joshua the high priest, is expressed) is ever waiting for occasion, ever craving permission of God to seduce and pervert them ; success therein being extremely conducible to his villainous designs. The world continually doth assault them with all its advantages, with all its baits of pleasure, with all its intice-

ments to pride and vanity, to oppression and injustice, to sloth, to luxury, to exorbitant self-will and self-conceit, to every sort of vicious practice. Their eminency of state, their affluence of wealth, their uncontrollable power, their exemption from common restraints, their continual distractions and incumbrances by varieties of care and business, their multitude of obsequious followers, and scarcity of faithful friends to advise or reprove them, their having no obstacles before them to check their wills, to cross their humors, to curb their lusts and passions, are so many dangerous snares unto them: wherefore they do need plentiful measures of grace, and mighty assistances from God, to preserve them from the worst errors and sins; into which otherwise it is almost a miracle if they are not plunged.

And being they are so liable to sin, they must consequently stand often in need of God's mercy to bear with them, and to pardon them.

They therefore, on so many accounts needing special help and grace from heaven, do most need prayers to derive it thence for them.

All princes indeed do need them. Good princes need many prayers for God's help, to uphold and confirm them in their virtue: bad princes need deprecations of God's wrath and judgment toward them for offending his Majesty; together with supplications for God's grace to convert and reform them: the most desperate and incorrigible need prayers, that God would overrule and restrain them from doing mischief to themselves and others. All princes having many avocations and temptations, hindering them to pray enough for themselves, do need supplemental aids from the devotions of others.

Wherefore if we love them, if we love our country, if we love ourselves, if we tender the interests of truth, of piety, of common good, we, considering their case, and manifold need of prayers, will not fail earnestly to sue for them; that God would afford needful assistance to them in the administration of their high office, in the improvement of their great talents, in the conduct and management of their arduous affairs; that he graciously would direct them in their perplexed counsels, would back them in their difficult undertakings, would protect their persons from dangers, would keep their hearts from the

prevalency of temptations, would pardon their failings and trespasses. Again,

9. Whereas God hath declared that he hath special regard to princes, and a more than ordinary care over them, because they have a peculiar relation to him as his representatives, the 'ministers of his kingdom,' the main instruments of his providence, whereby he conveyeth his favors, and dispenseth his justice to men; because also the good of mankind, which he especially tendereth, is mainly concerned in their welfare; whereas, I say, 'it is he that giveth salvation unto kings;' that 'giveth great deliverance to his king, and showeth mercy to his anointed;' that hath 'the king's heart, and his breath,' and 'all his ways in his hand:' even on this account our prayers for them are the more required. For it is a method of God, and an established rule of divine providence, not to dispense special blessings without particular conditions, and the concurrence of our duty in observance of what he prescribeth in respect to them. Seeing then he hath enjoined that, in order to our obtaining those great benefits which issue from his special care over princes, we should pray for it, and seek it from his hands; the omission of this duty will intercept it, or bereave us of its advantages; nor in that case may we expect any blessings of that kind. As without praying for ourselves we must not expect private favors from heaven; so without praying for our prince we cannot well hope for public blessings. For, as a profane person (who in effect disavoweth God by not regarding to seek his favor and aid) is not qualified to receive any good from him; so a profane nation (which disclaimeth God's government of the world by not invoking his benediction on those who moderate it under him) is not well capable of common benefits. It is on all accounts true which Ezra said, 'The hand of our God is on all them for good that seek him: but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.' If therefore we desire that our prince should not lose God's special regard, if we would not forfeit the benefits thereof to ourselves, we must conspire in hearty prayers for him.

10. To engage and encourage us in which practice, we may farther consider that such prayers, offered duly, (with frequency and constancy, with sincerity and zeal,) do always turn

to good account, and never want good effect: the which, if it be not always easily discernible, yet it is certainly real; if it be not perfect as we may desire, yet it is competent, as expediency requireth, or as the condition of things will bear.

There may be impediments to a full success of the best prayers; they may not ever prevail to render princes completely good or extremely prosperous: for some concurrence of their own will is requisite to produce their virtue, God rarely working with irresistible power or fatal efficacy; and the state of things, or capacities of persons, are not always fitly suited for prosperity. Yet are not such prayers ever wholly vain or fruitless; for God never prescribeth means unavailable to the end: he never would have commanded us particularly to pray for kings, if he did not mean to bestow a good issue to that practice.

And surely he that hath promised to hear all requests, with faith and sincerity and incessant earnestness presented to him, cannot fail to hear those which are of such consequence, which are so agreeable to his will, which do include so much honesty and charity. In this case, surely, we may have some confidence, according to that of St. John, 'This is the confidence we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.'

As the good bishop, observing St. Austin's mother, with what constancy and passionateness she did pray for her son, being then engaged in ways of error and vanity, did encourage her, saying, 'It is impossible that a son of those devotions should perish;' so may we hopefully presume, and encourage ourselves, that a prince will not miscarry, for whose welfare many good people do earnestly solicit: *Fieri non potest, ut princeps istarum lacrymarum pereat.*

You know in general the mighty efficacy of prayer; what pregnant assurances there are, and how wonderful instances thereof occur in holy Scripture, both in relation to public and private blessings: how it is often promised, that 'all things, whatsoever we shall ask in prayer believing, we shall receive;' and that 'whoever asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened:' how the prayer of Abraham did heal Abimelech and his family of bar-

renness; how the prayers of Moses did quench the fire, and cure the bitings of the fiery serpents; how the prayer of Joshua did arrest the sun; how the prayer of Hannah did procure Samuel to her, as his name doth import; how Elias's prayers did open and shut the heavens; how the same holy prophet's prayer did reduce a departed soul, and that of Elisha did effect the same, and that of another prophet did restore Jeroboam's withered hand; how the prayers of God's people frequently did 'raise them up saviours,' and 'when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, he delivered them out of their distresses:' how the prayers of Asa discomfited a million of Arabians, and those of Jehoshaphat destroyed a numerous army of his enemies by their own hands, and those of Hezekiah brought down an angel from heaven to cut off the Assyrians, and those of Manasses restored him to his kingdom, and those of Esther saved her people from the brink of ruin, and those of Nehemiah inclined a pagan king's heart to favor his pious design for re-edifying Jerusalem, and those of Daniel obtained strange visions and discoveries. How Noah, Job, Daniel, Moses, and Samuel are represented as powerful intercessors with God; and consequently it is intimated, that the great things achieved by them were chiefly done by the force of their prayers.

And seeing prayers in so many cases are so effectual, and work such miracles; what may we hope from them in this, wherein God so expressly and particularly directeth us to use them? If our prayers can so much avail to our personal and private advantage, if they may be very helpful to our friends; how much shall the devotions of many good men, all levelled at one mark, and aiming at a public most considerable good, be prevalent with the divine goodness? However, if God be not moved by prayers to convert a prince from all sin, to make him do all the good he might, to bless him in all matters; yet he may thence be induced to restrain him from much evil, to keep him from being worse, or from doing worse than otherwise would be; he may dispose him to do many things well, or better than of himself he would do; he may preserve him from many disasters otherwise incident to him: which will be considerable effects of prayer.

11. I shall add but one general consideration more, which is

this, that prayer is the only allowable way of redressing our case, if we do suffer by or for princes.

Are they bad, or do they misdemean themselves in their administration of government and justice? we may not by any violent or rough way attempt to reclaim them; for they are not accountable to us, or liable to our correction. 'Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who shall say to him, What doest thou?' was the preacher's doctrine.

Do they oppress us, or abuse us? do they treat us harshly, or cruelly persecute us? we must not kick against them, nor strive to right ourselves by resistance. For, 'against a king,' saith the wise man, 'there is no rising up:' and, 'who,' said David, 'can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?' And, 'they,' saith St. Paul, 'that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.'

We must not so much as ease our stomach, or discharge our passion, by railing or inveighing against them. For, 'thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people,' is a divine law; and, to 'blaspheme,' or revile, 'dignities,' is by St. Peter and St. Jude reprehended as a notable crime.

We must not be bold or free in taxing their actions. For, 'is it fit,' said Elihu, 'to say to a king, Thou art wicked, and to princes, Ye are ungodly?' and to 'reproach the footsteps of God's anointed' is implied to be an impious practice.

We must forbear even complaining and murmuring against them. For murmurers are condemned as no mean sort of offenders; and the Jews in the wilderness were sorely punished for such behavior.

We must not (according to the preacher's advice) so much as 'curse them in our thoughts;' or not entertain ill conceits and ill wishes in our minds toward them.

To do these things is not only high presumption in regard to them, (inconsistent with the dutiful affection and respect which we owe to them,) but it is flat impiety toward God, and an invasion of his authority; who alone is 'King of kings,' and hath reserved to himself the prerogative of judging, of rebuking, of punishing kings, when he findeth cause.

These were the misdemeanors of those in the late times, who,

instead of praying for their sovereign, did clamor and rail at him, did asperse him with foul imputations, did accuse his proceedings, did raise tumults and levy war against him, pretending by rude force to reduce him to his duty; so usurping on their prince, or rather on God himself; assuming his right, and taking his work out of his hands; discovering also therein great profaneness of mind, and distrust of God's providence; as if God, being implored by prayer, could not, or would not, had it been needful, without such irregular courses, have redressed those evils in church or state, which they pretended to feel or fear.

Nothing therefore in such cases is left to us for our remedy or ease, but having recourse to God himself, and seeking relief from his hand in his good time, by converting our prince, or directing him into a good course; however comforting ourselves in the conscience of submitting to God's will.*

This is the only method St. Paul did prescribe, even when Nero, a most vile, flagitious man, a sorry and naughty governor as could be, a monstrous tyrant, and most bloody persecutor, (the very inventor of persecution,) did sway the empire.† He did not advise Christians to stand on their guard, to contrive plots, to provide arms, to raise mutinies and insurrections against him; but to offer supplications, prayers, and intercessions for him, as the best means of their security and comfort.‡ And this was the course of the primitive Christians during their hard condition under the domination of heathen princes, impugners of their religion: 'Prayers and tears were' then the

* Absit enim ut indigne feramus ea nos pati quæ optamus, aut ultionem a nobis aliquam machinemur, quam a Deo expectamus.—Tert. ad Scap. 2.

† Qui non dicam regum, sed omnium hominum, et vel bestiarum sordidissimus, dignus exstitit qui persecutionem in Christianos primus inciperet.—Sulp. Sev. ii. 40.

‡ Ita nos magis oramus pro salute imperatoris, ab eo eam postulantes qui præstare potest. Et utique ex disciplina patientiæ divinæ agere nos, satis manifestum esse vobis potest, cum tanta hominum multitudo, pars pene major civitatis cujusque, in silentio et modestia agimus.—Tert. ad Scap. 2.

only 'arms of the church;' whereby they long defended it from ruin, and at last advanced it to most glorious prosperity.'*

Indeed if, not assuming the liberty to find fault with princes, we would practise the duty of seeking God for his blessing on their proceedings; if, forbearing to scan and censure acts of state, we would earnestly implore God's direction of them; if, leaving to conceive disgusts, and vent complaints about the state of things, we would assiduously petition God for the settlement of them in good order; if, instead of being shrewd politicians, or smart judges in such matters, we would be devout orators and humble solicitors at the throne of grace; our endeavors surely would find much better effect toward public advantage: we certainly might do more good in our closets by a few hearty wishes uttered there, than by all our tattling or jangling politics in corners.

There are great contrivances to settle things: every one hath his model of state, or method of policy, to communicate for ordering the state; each is zealous for his own conceit, and apt to be displeased with those who dissent from him: but it is, as the fairest and justest, so the surest and likeliest way of reducing things to a firm composure, (without more ado, letting the world alone, to move on its own hinges, and not impertinently troubling ourselves or others with the conduct of it,) simply to request of Almighty God, the sovereign Governor and sole Disposer of things, that he would lead his own vicegerents in the management of the charge by himself committed to them. 'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God,' is a rule very applicable to this case.

As God's providence is the only sure ground of our confidence or hope for the preservation of church and state, or for the restitution of things into a stable quiet; so it is only our hearty prayers, joined with a conscientious observance of God's laws, whereby we can incline Providence to favor us. By them alone we may hope to save things from sinking into dis-

* Fundendo sanguinem, et patiendo magis quam faciendo contumelias, Christi fundata est ecclesia; persecutionibus crevit, &c.—Hier. Ep. 62.

order, we may assuage the factions, we may defeat the machinations against the public welfare.

12. Seeing then we have so many good arguments and motives inducing to pray for kings, it is no wonder that, to back them, we may also allege the practice of the church, continually in all times performing this duty in its most sacred offices, especially in the celebration of the holy communion.

St. Paul indeed, when he saith, 'I exhort first of all, that prayers be made,' doth chiefly impose this duty on Timothy, or supposeth it incumbent on the pastors of the church, to take special care that prayers be made for this purpose, and offered up in the church jointly by all Christians: and accordingly the ancient Christians, as Tertullian doth assure us, did "always pray for the emperors, that God would grant them a long life, a secure reign, a safe family, valiant armies, a faithful senate, a loyal people, a quiet world, and whatever they, as men or as emperors, could wish."* Thus, addeth he, even for their persecutors, and in the very pangs of their sufferings, they did not fail to practise. Likewise of the church in his time St. Chrysostom telleth us, that "all communicants did know how every day, both at even and morning, they did make supplication for all the world, and for the emperor, and for all that are in authority."†

And in the Greek liturgies (the composure whereof is fathered on St. Chrysostom) there are divers prayers interspersed for the emperors, couched in terms very pregnant and respectful.

If the offices of the Roman church, and of the churches truckling under it, in latter times, shall seem more defective or sparing in this point of service, the reason may be, for that a

* Precantes sumus semper pro omnibus imperatoribus vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum, quæcunque hominis et Cæsaris vota sunt.—Tert. Apol. cap. 30.

Hoc agite, boni præsules, extorquete animam Deo supplicantem pro imperatore.—Ibid.

† Καὶ τοῦτο ἴσασιν οἱ μύσται, πῶς καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν γίνεται καὶ ἐν ἑσπέρᾳ καὶ ἐν πρωΐᾳ· πῶς ὑπὲρ παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ βασιλέων, καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντων, ποιούμεθα τὴν δέησιν.—Chrys. in 1 Tim. ii. 1.

superlative regard to the Solar or Pontifical authority (as Pope Innocent III. distinguished) did obscure their devotion for the Lunar or Regal Majesty. But our church hath been abundantly careful, that we should in most ample manner discharge this duty; having in each of her holy offices directed us to pray for our king in expressions most full, hearty, and lively.

She hath indeed been charged as somewhat lavish or over-liberal of her devotions in this case. But it is a good fault, and we little need fear over-doing in observance of a precept so very reasonable, and so important; supposing that we have a due care to join our heart with the church's words, and to the frequency of prayers for our prince do confer a suitable fervency. If we be not dead, or merely formal, we can hardly be too copious in this kind of devotion; reiteration of words can do no harm, being accompanied with the renovation of our desires. Our text itself will bear us out in such a practice; the Apostle therein by variety of expression appearing solicitous, that abundance of prayers for kings should be offered in the church, and no sort of them omitted.

There are so many general inducements to this duty at all times; and there are beside divers particular reasons enforcing it now, in the present state and posture of things.

Times of trouble, of danger, of fear, of darkness and perplexity, of distraction and distress, of guilt and deserved wrath, are most seasonable for recourse to the divine help and mercy in prayer.*

And are not ours such? are they not much like to those of which the psalmist saith, 'They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course?' or like those of which our Lord spake, when there was 'on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which were coming on the earth?'

Are not the days gloomy, so that no human providence can see far, no wisdom can descry the issue of things?

Is it not a very unsettled world, wherein all the public

* Inops senatus auxilii humani ad deos populum ac vota vertit.—Liv. iii. 7. v. 16.

frames are shaken almost off the hinges, and the minds of men extremely discomposed with various passions; with fear, suspicion, anger, discontent, and impatience? How from dissensions in opinion do violent factions and feuds rage; the hearts of men boiling with fierce animosities, and being exasperated against one another, beyond any hopes or visible means of reconcilement!

Are not the fences of discipline cast down? Is there any conscience made of violating laws? Is not the dread of authority exceedingly abated, and all government overborne by unbridled licentiousness?

How many adversaries are there, 'bearing ill will to our Sion!' How many turbulent, malicious, crafty spirits, eagerly bent, and watching for occasion to subvert the church, to disturb the state, to introduce confusion in all things! How many Edomites, who say of Jerusalem, (both ecclesiastical and civil,) 'Down with it, down with it even to the ground!'

Have we not great reason to be fearful of God's just displeasure, and that heavy judgments will be poured on us for our manifold heinous provocations and crying sins; for the prodigious growth of atheism, infidelity, and profaneness; for the rife practice of all impieties, iniquities, and impurities, with most impudent boldness, or rather with outrageous insolence; for the extreme dissoluteness in manners; the gross neglect or contempt of all duties; the great stupidity and coldness of people generally as to all concerns of religion; for the want of religious awe toward God, of charity toward our neighbor, of respect to our superiors, of sobriety in our conversation; for our ingratitude for many great mercies, and incorrigibleness under many sore chastisements, our insensibleness of many plain warnings, loudly calling us to repentance?

Is not all the world about us in combustion, cruel wars raging every where, and Christendom weltering in blood? and although at present, by God's mercy, we are free, who knows but that soon, by God's justice, the neighboring flames may catch our houses?

In fine, is not our case palpably such, that for any good composure or reinstatement of things in good order, for upholding truth and sound doctrine, for reducing charity and peace, for

reviving the spirit of piety, and bringing virtue again into request; for preserving state and church from ruin; we can have no confidence or reasonable hope, but in the good providence and merciful succor of Almighty God: 'beside whom there is no Saviour;' who alone is 'the hope of Israel, and Saviour thereof in time of trouble?' we now having great cause to pray with our Lord's disciples in the storm, 'Lord, save us, we perish.'

On such considerations, and others whereof I suppose you are sufficiently apprehensive, we now especially are obliged earnestly to pray for our king, that God in mercy would preserve his royal person, and inspire his mind with light, and endue his heart with grace, and in all things bless him to us, to be 'a repairer of our breaches, and a restorer of paths to dwell in; so that under him we may lead a quiet life in all godliness and honesty.'

I have done with the first duty (prayer for kings;) on which I have the rather so largely insisted, because it is very seasonable to our present condition.

II. The other (thanksgiving) I shall but touch, and need not perhaps to do more. For,

1. As to general inducements, they are the same, or very like to those which are for prayer; it being plain that whatever we are concerned to pray for, when we want it, that we are bound to thank God for, when he vouchsafeth to bestow it. And if common charity should dispose us to resent the good of princes with complacence; if their welfare be a public benefit; if ourselves are interested in it, and partake great advantages thereby; if in equity and ingenuity we are bound to seek it; then, surely, we are much engaged to thank God, the bountiful donor of it, for his goodness in conferring it.

2. As for particular motives, suiting the present occasion, I need not by information or impression of them farther to stretch your patience; seeing you cannot be ignorant or insensible of the grand benefits by the divine goodness bestowed on our king, and on ourselves, which this day we are bound with all grateful acknowlegement to commemorate. Wherefore, instead of

reciting trite stories, and urging obvious reasons, (which a small recollection will suggest to you,) I shall only request you to join with me in the practice of the duty, and in acclamation of praise to God. Even so

Blessed be God, who hath given to us so gracious and benign a prince, (the experiments of whose clemency and goodness no history can parallel,) to sit on the throne of his blessed father, and renowned ancestors.

Blessed be God, who hath protected him in so many encounters, hath saved him from so many dangers and snares, hath delivered him from so great troubles.

Blessed be God, who in so wonderful a manner, by such miraculous trains of providence, did reduce him to his country, and reinstate him in the possession of his rights; thereby vindicating his own just providence, 'declaring his salvation, and openly showing his righteousness in the sight of all people.'

Blessed be God, who in him and with him did restore to us our ancient good constitution of government, our laws and liberties, our peace and quiet; rescuing us from lawless usurpations and tyrannical yokes, from the insultings of error and iniquity, from horrible distractions and confusions.

Ever blessed be God, who hath 'turned the captivity of Sion;' hath raised our church from the dust, and re-established the sound doctrine, the decent order, the wholesome discipline thereof; hath restored true religion with its supports, advantages, and encouragements.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath granted us to continue these sixteen years in the peaceable fruition of those blessings.

'Praised be God, who hath not cast out our prayer, nor turned his mercy from us.'

Praised be God, who 'hath turned our heaviness into joy, hath put off our sackcloth, and girded us with gladness.'

'Let our mouth speak the praise of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.'

'The Lord liveth, and blessed be our rock; and let the God of our salvation be exalted.'

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and amen.'

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the Lord.'

SUMMARY OF SERMON XI.

PSALM LXIV.—VERSES 9. 10.

PARALLEL case in the Psalm from which the text is taken, to that commemorated in the service of the day: duties enjoined on us designated in the text. 1. Wisely to consider God's doing: 2. to fear: 3. to declare God's work: 4. to be glad in the Lord: 5. to trust in God: 6. to glory. All these particulars may be understood in a double manner: either as declarative of the event, or as directing the practice on such emergencies: this enlarged on.

I. We are on such occasions obliged *wisely to consider*, or *to understand God's doing*. This is placed first, as previous in its nature, and influential on the rest. There are many who are very inobservant and careless with regard to things of this nature, such as those of whom the prophet speaks, Isa. v. 12. Reasons given for this carelessness. It is shown that both reason and holy Scripture plainly declare our obligation to consider and perceive God's doings. There are some distinctive marks or characters, by which we may perceive God's hand, on which may be grounded rules declarative of special providence, such as commonly will hold, although they sometimes may admit of exceptions, and should be warily applied: for example, 1. the wonderful strangeness of events compared with the ordinary course of things, or natural influence of causes: 2. the reasonableness and suddenness of events, when there is occasion to acknowlege with the prophet, *thou didst terrible things, that we looked not for:* Isa. lxiv. 3.: 3. the great utility and beneficial influence of occurrences, especially

in regard to the public state of things, and to great personages in whose welfare the public is much concerned: 4. the righteousness of the case, or the advantage springing from events to the maintenance of right, the vindication of innocence, the defence of truth, the encouragement of piety and virtue: 5. the correspondence of events to the prayers and desires of good men; of which many examples are quoted from the holy Scriptures: 6. the near resemblance or significant correspondence which they usually bear to the actions on which they are grounded, and which serve to discover their original: 7. the harmonious conspiracy of various accidents to one end or effect; it being beyond the reach of fortune to range various causes in such order. By these means, if we will consider wisely, with minds pure from vain prejudices and corrupt affections, we may discern and understand God's doing.

II. It is our duty, on all such remarkable occasions of providence, to fear God. *All men*, it is said, *shall fear*. It is our duty in such cases to be affected with all sorts of fear; with a fear of awful dread, with a fear of hearty reverence, with a fear of sober caution, yea, sometimes with a fear of dejecting consternation: these points enlarged on.

III. We are in such cases obliged *to declare God's work:* that is, openly to acknowlege and avow, to applaud and celebrate the special providence of God, with his adorable perfections displayed in such events; to the glory of God's name, in expression of our reverence and gratitude, for the common edification of men, which is the due improvement of our glory. Example of the holy psalmist.

IV. It is peculiarly the duty and practice of good men on such occasions to feel and to express religious joy. *The righteous shall be glad in the Lord.* Reasons given why good men have much cause, on many accounts, to be glad.

V. The next duty prescribed to good men in such cases is, to *trust in God;* that is, to have their affiance in God, on all

like occasions and emergencies, settled, improved, and corroborated thereby: for this is the proper end, as it immediately regards ourselves, of God's special and remarkable providence, viz. to nourish in well-disposed minds that faith in him, which is the root of all piety, and ground of devotion.

VI. Good men on such occasions should glory. *All the upright in heart shall glory:* that is, in contemplation of such providences feeling sprightly elevation of mind and transports of affection, they should exhibit triumphant demonstrations of satisfaction and alacrity. For such carriage in such cases we have the practice and the advice of the psalmist to direct us: instances quoted. Observations on the sense of the word ἐπαινεθήσονται, *they shall be praised.*

Such are the duties recommended in the text: concluding brief application of them to the particular case in view.

SERMON XI.

ON THE GUNPOWDER-TREASON.

PSALM LXIV.—VERSES 9. 10.

And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

If we should search about for a case parallel to that which we do now commemorate, we should, perhaps, hardly find one more patly such, than is that which is implied in this psalm: and if we would know the duties incumbent on us in reference to such an occasion, we could scarce better learn them otherwhere than in our text.

With attention perusing the psalm, we may therein observe that its great Author was apprehensive of a desperate plot by a confederacy of wicked and spiteful enemies, with great craft and secrecy, contrived against his safety. 'They,' saith he, 'encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them?' That for preventing the blow threatened by this design, (whereof he had some glimpse, or some presumption, grounded on the knowlege of their implacable and active malice,) he doth implore divine protection: 'hide me,' saith he, 'from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity.' That he did confide in God's mercy and justice for the seasonable defeating, for the fit avenging their machination: 'God,' saith he, 'shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly

shall they be wounded.' That they should themselves become the detectors of their crime, and the instruments of the exemplary punishment due thereto: 'they,' addeth he, 'shall make their own tongue to fall on themselves: all that see them shall flee away.'

Such was the case; the which unto what passage in the history it doth relate, or whether it belongeth to any we have recorded, it may not be easy to determine. Expositors commonly do refer it to the designs of Saul on David's life. But this seeming purely conjecture, not founded on any express words, or pregnant intimations in the text, I shall leave that inquiry in its own uncertainty. It sufficeth to make good its pertinency, that there was such a mischievous conspiracy, deeply projected, against David; (a very great personage, in whose safety the public state of God's people was principally concerned; he being then king of Israel, at least in designation, and therefore in the precedent psalm, endited in Saul's time, is so styled;) from the peril whereof he by the special providence of God was rescued, with the notable disappointment and grievous confusion of those who managed it. The which case (at least in kind, if not in degree) beareth a plain resemblance to that which lieth before us.

And the duties, which on that occasion are signified to concern people then, do no less now sort to us; the which, as they lie couched in our text, are these: 1. Wisely to consider God's doing; 2. to fear; 3. to declare God's work; 4. to be glad in the Lord; 5. to trust in God; 6. to glory. Of which the first three are represented as more generally concerning men; the others as appertaining more peculiarly to righteous and upright persons.

These duties it shall be my endeavor somewhat to explain and press, in a manner applicable to the present case. I call them duties; and to warrant the doing so, it is requisite to consider that all these particulars may be understood in a double manner; either as declarative of event, or as directive of practice on such emergencies.

When God doth so interpose his hand as signally to check and confound mischievous enterprises, it will be apt to stir up in the minds of men an apprehension of God's special provi-

dence, to strike into their hearts a dread of his power and justice, to wring from their mouths suitable declarations and acknowlegements; and particularly then good men will be affected with pious joy; they will be encouraged to confide in God, they will be moved to glory, or to express a triumphant satisfaction in God's proceedings. These events naturally do result from such providential occurrences; for production of these events such occurrences are purposely designed; and accordingly (where men are not by profane opinions or affections much indisposed) they do commonly follow.

But yet they are not proposed simply as events, but also as matters of duty: for men are obliged readily to admit such impressions on their minds, hearts, and lives, from the special works of providence; they are bound not to cross those natural tendencies, not to frustrate those wise intents of God, aiming at the production of such good dispositions and good practices: whence if those effects do not arise, as often notoriously they do not in some persons, men thereby do incur much guilt and blame.

It is indeed ordinary to represent matter of duty in this way, expressing those practices consequent in effect, which in obligation should follow, according to God's purpose, and the nature of causes ordered by him. As when, for instance, God in the law had prescribed duty, and threatened sore punishment on the disobedient, it is subjoined, 'and all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously:' the meaning is, that such exemplary punishment is in its nature apt, and its design tendeth to produce such effects, although not ever, questionless, with due success, so as to prevent all transgression of those laws. So also, 'when,' saith the prophet, 'thy judgments are in the land, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness:' the sense is, that divine judgments in themselves are instructive of duty, it is their drift to inform men therein, and men ought to learn that lesson from them; although in effect divers there be whom no judgments can make wiser or better; such as those of whom in the same prophet it is said, 'the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them:' and in another, 'in vain have I smitten your children, they received no correction.' As therefore frequently

otherwhere, so also here this kind of expression may be taken chiefly to import duty. To begin then with the first of these duties.

I. We are on such occasions obliged 'wisely to consider' (or, as the Greek rendereth it, *συνιέναι*, 'to understand,' or 'to perceive,' as our old translation hath it) 'God's doing.' This I put in the first place, as previous in nature, and influential on the rest: whence (although in the Hebrew it be knit to the rest, as they all are to one another, by the conjunctive particle *ve, and*, yet) we do translate it casually, 'for they shall wisely consider,' 'for they shall perceive;' because indeed without duly considering and rightly understanding such occurrences to proceed from God, none of the other acts can or will be performed: attentive consideration is needful to beget knowlege and persuasion; these to breed affection and practice.

There are many who, in such cases, are nowise apprehensive of God's special providence, or affected with it; because they do not consider, or do not consider wisely and intelligently.

Some are very inobservant and careless in regard to things of this nature; so drowsy and heedless, as not to attend to whatever passeth, or to mind what God acteth in the world: such as those of whom the prophet saith, 'the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands:' that is, their minds are so amused by wanton divertisements, their hearts are so immersed in sensual enjoyments, as nowise to observe the most notable occurrences of providence.

Others (although they do ken and regard what is done, as matter of news, or story, entertaining curiosity and talk; yet) out of sloth or stupidity do little consider it, or study whence it springeth; contenting themselves with none, or with any superficial account which fancy or appearance suggesteth: like beasts they do take in things obvious to their sense, and perhaps stand gazing on them; but do not make any careful reflexion, or inquiry into their original causes and reasons; taking (as a dog, when he biteth the stone flung at him, or as a

child that is angry with the log he falleth on) whatever appeareth next to be the principal cause: such as the psalmist again toucheth, when he saith, 'a brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this:' and as he doth acknowlege himself on one occasion to have been; 'so foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee.'

Others pretend to consider much, and seem very inquisitive; yet (being misguided by vain prejudices or foul affections) do not consider wisely, or well understand these matters; the result of their care and study about them being to father them on wrong causes, ascribing them to the mere conduct and agency of visible causes, hurried by a necessary swinge, or rolling on by a casual fluctuation of things; not descrying God's hand in them, but profanely discarding and disclaiming it: such as those in the psalms, who so reflected on providence as to say, 'How doth God know? and is there knowlege in the Most High?' 'The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it:' such as hath been the brood of Epicurean and profane considerers in all times, who have earnestly plodded, and strained their wits, to exclude God from any inspection or influence on our affairs.

Some indeed there have been so very dull and stupid, or so perverse and profane, as not to discern God's hand, when it was 'made bare,' 'raised up,' and 'stretched out' in the achievement of most prodigious works; not to read providence, when set forth in the largest and fairest print: such as those of whom it is said in the psalm, 'our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt;' and those of whom it is observed in the gospel, 'though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not:' such as the mutinous people, who, although they beheld 'the earth swallowing up Korah with his complices,' and 'a fire from the Lord consuming the men that offered incense;' yet presently did fall a charging Moses and Aaron, saying, 'Ye have killed the people of the Lord.' No wonder then, if many do not perceive the same hand, when it is wrapped up in a complication with inferior causes; when it is not lifted up so high, or so far extended in miraculous performances.

The special providence of God in events here effected or ordered by him, is indeed commonly not discernible without

good judgment and great care; it is not commonly impressed on events in characters so big and clear, as to be legible to every eye, or to any eye not endued with a sharp perspicacy, not applying an industrious heedfulness: the tracts thereof are too fine and subtile to be descried by a dim sight, with a transient glance, or on a gross view: it is seldom so very conspicuous, that persons incredulous, or any wise indisposed to admit it, can easily be convinced thereof, or constrained to acknowlege it: it is often (on many accounts, from many causes) very obscure, and not easily discernible to the most sagacious, most watchful, most willing observers. For the instruments of providence being free agents, acting with unaccountable variety, nothing can happen which may not be imputed to them, with some colorable pretence. Divine and human influences are so twisted and knit together, that it is hard to sever them. The manner of divine efficacy is so very soft and gentle, that we cannot easily trace its footsteps. God designeth not commonly to exert his hand in a notorious way, but often purposely doth conceal it. Whereas also it is not fit to charge on God's special hand of providence any event, wherein special ends of wisdom or goodness do not shine; it is often hard to discover such ends, which usually are wrapped in perplexities: because God acteth variously, (according to circumstances of things, and the disposition, capacity, or state of objects,) so as to do the same thing for different ends, and different things for the same end: because there are different ends, unto which Providence in various order and measure hath regard, which our short and narrow prospect cannot reach: because God, in prosecution of his ends, is not wont to proceed in the most direct and compendious way; but windeth about in a large circuit, enfolding many concurrent and subordinate designs: because the expediency of things to be permitted or performed doth not consist in single acts or events, but in many conspiring to one common end: because we cannot apprehend the consequences, nor balance the convenience of things in order to good ends: because we are apt to measure things by their congruity to our opinions, expectations, and affections: because many proceedings of God depend on grounds inaccessible to our apprehension; such as his own secret decrees, the knowlege of men's thoughts, close purposes, clandestine de-

signs, true qualifications and merits; his prescience of contingent events, and what the result will be from the combination of numberless causes: because sometimes he doth act in methods of wisdom, and by rules of justice, surpassing our capacity to know, either from the finiteness of our nature, or the feebleness of our reason, or the meanness of our state and circumstances here: because all the divine administration of affairs hath no complete determination or final issue here; that being reserved to the great day of reckoning and judgment. It is farther also expedient that many occurrences should be puzzling to us, to quash our presumption, to exercise our faith, to quicken our industry, to engage us on adoring that wisdom which we cannot comprehend. On such accounts, for such causes, (which time will not give me leave to explain and exemplify,) the special providence of God is often cloudy, is seldom so clear, that without great heed and consideration we can perceive it. But however to do so is plainly our duty; and therefore possible.

For our reason was not given us to be idle on so important occasions; or that we should be as brute spectators of what God doeth. He surely in the governance of his noblest creature here discovereth his being, and displayeth his attributes: we therefore carefully should observe it. He thereby (and no otherwise in a public way) doth continually *speak*, and signify to us his mind: and fit it is, that we his subjects should hear, should attend to the least intimations of his pleasure. To him thence glory should accrue, the which who but we can render? And that we may render it, we must know the grounds of it. In fine, for the support of God's kingdom, for upholding the reverence due to his administration of justice among us, it is requisite that by apparent dispensation of recompenses duty should be encouraged, and disobedience checked: very foolish therefore we must be, if we regard not such dispensations.

So reason dictateth, and holy Scripture more plainly declareth our obligation to consider and perceive God's doings. To do so is recommended to us as a singular point of wisdom: 'Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.' 'Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and

righteousness in the earth.' 'Who is wise? and he shall understand these things; prudent? and he shall know them. For the ways of the Lord are right,' &c. We are vehemently provoked thereto: 'Understand, ye brutish among the people; and, ye fools, when will ye be wise?' They are reproved for neglect and defailance, 'who do not regard the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hand.' The not discerning Providence is reproached as a piece of shameful folly; 'A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand:' and of woful pravity; 'O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but how is it that ye cannot discern this time?' To contemplate and study Providence is the practice of good men. 'I will meditate on all thy works,' saith the psalmist, chiefly respecting works of this kind: and, 'The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.' It is a fit matter of devotion, warranted by the practice of good men, to implore God's manifestation of his justice and power this way. 'O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself; lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth.' It is God's manner hereby to notify himself. 'The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth.' He for this very purpose doth interpose his hand; 'that men may know it is his hand, and that the Lord hath done it;' that, as it is in Esay, 'they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.' *He manageth things, so that men may be brought to know, may be induced to acknowlege his authority, and his equity in the management thereof; that 'they may know that he, whose name is Jehovah, is the Most High over all the earth:' that 'they may say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.' In fine, the knowlege of God's special providence is frequently represented as a mean of nourishing our faith and hope in him, as a ground of thankfulness and praise to him, as an incentive of the best affections (of holy joy, and humble fear, and hearty

* God thereby doth support and encourage good men.
He doth thereby convince and confound ill men.—Ps. ix. 19. 20.
He thereby doth instruct all men.—Isa. xxvi. 9.

love) toward him: wherefore we ought to seek it, and we may attain it.

There are consequently some distinctive marks, or characters, by which we may perceive God's hand: and such may these be which follow, (drawn from the special nature, manner, adjuncts, and consequences of events:) on which may be grounded rules declarative of special providence, such as commonly will hold, although sometimes they may admit exceptions, and should be warily applied.

1. The wonderful strangeness of events, compared with the ordinary course of things, or the natural influence of causes; when effects are performed by no visible means, or by means disproportionate, unsuitable, repugnant to the effect. Sometimes great exploits are achieved, mighty forces are discomfited, huge structures are demolished, designs backed with all advantages of wit and strength are confounded, none knows how, by no considerable means that appear; nature rising up in arms against them; panic fears seizing on the abettors of them; dissensions and treacheries springing up among the actors; sudden deaths snatching away the principal instruments of them. As, when 'the stars in their course fought against Sisera:' when the winds and skies became auxiliaries to Theodosius:* when 'the Lord thundered with a great thunder on the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel:' when 'the Lord made the host of Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, of horses, of a great host;' —whence 'they arose and fled:' when 'the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another:' when 'the angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000 men; and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses:' when the mighty power of Antiochus was, as it is said, to be 'broken without hands:' and when, as it is foretold, 'a stone cut out of the mountain without hands should break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold.' Such

* Aug. de Civ. Dei, v. 26.

events do speak God to be their cause, by his invisible efficacy supplying the defect of apparent means.

So likewise, when by weak forces great feats are accomplished, and impotency triumpheth over might;* when, as the prophet saith, 'the captives of the mighty are taken away, and the prey of the terrible is delivered:' when 'one man,' as is promised, 'doth chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight:' when a stripling, furnished only with faith and a pebble, shall knock down a monstrous giant, armed with a helmet of brass and a coat of mail, with a huge target, sword, and spear: when successes arrive like those recorded in Scripture under the conduct of Joshua, Gideon, Jonathan, Asa, Jehosaphat; wherein very small forces by uncouth means did subdue formidable powers: this doth argue that God doth interpose; 'with whom,' as it is said, 'it is all one to save by many, or by few, and those that have no power;' whose 'power is perfected in weakness;' who 'breaketh the arm of the wicked,' and 'weakeneth the strength of the mighty,' and 'delivereth the poor from him that is too strong for him.'

Also, when great policy and craft do effect nothing, but are blasted of themselves, or baffled by simplicity: when cunningly-laid designs are soon thwarted and overturned: when most perspicacious and profound counsellors are so blinded, or so infatuated, as to mistake in plain cases, to oversee things most obvious and palpable: when profane, malicious, subtile, treacherous politicians (such as Abimelech, Achitophel, Haman, Sejanus, Stilico, Borgia, with many like occurring in story) are not only supplanted in their wicked contrivances, but dismally chastised for them: the occurrences do more than insinuate divine wisdom to intervene, countermining and confounding such devices. For he it is, who, as the Scripture telleth us, 'maketh the diviners mad;' 'turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowlege foolish;' 'disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise; taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and turneth down the counsel of the froward headlong.'

* Vid. Artabani Orat. apud Herod. Polymn. pag. 246.—Hom. Il. π. ver. 688.

Whenever a just cause or honest design, without any support or succor of worldly means, (without authority, power, wit, learning, eloquence,) doth against all opposition of violence and art prevail; this signifieth him to yield a special countenance and aid thereto, who, to depress human pride, and advance his own glory, 'hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are:' (that are with us in most request and esteem.)

Again, when plots, with extreme caution and secrecy contrived in darkness, are by improbable means, by unaccountable accidents disclosed and brought to light; 'a bird of the air,' as the wise man speaketh, 'telling the matter;' 'the stones in the wall,' as it is in the prophet, 'crying out' Treason. The king cannot sleep: to divert him the chronicle is called for; Mordecai's service is there pitched on; an inquiry is made concerning his recompense; honor is decreed him; so doth Haman's cruel device come out. Pity seizeth on a pitiless heart toward one among a huge number of innocents devoted to slaughter: that he may be saved, a letter must be sent: in that, words inserted suggesting the manner of execution; that carried to the wise king, who presently smelleth it out: so this day's plot was discovered. Such events, whence can they well proceed, but from the all-piercing and ever-watchful care of him, 'whose eyes,' as Elihu said, 'are on the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings?' 'There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity shall hide themselves;' for 'hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.'

Also, when ill men by their perverse wiliness do notably befool and insnare themselves, laying trains to blow up their own designs, involving themselves in that ruin and mischief into which they studied to draw others; as when Saul, exposing David's life to hazard, increaseth his honor; when the Persian nobles, incensing the king against Daniel, do occasion his growth in favor, with their own destruction; when Haman, by contriving to destroy God's people, doth advance them, and

rearing a gallows for Mordecai, doth prepare it for himself: when it happeneth according to those passages in the Psalms, 'the wicked are taken in the devices that they imagined;' 'in the net which they hid is their own foot taken:' 'he made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made:' 'his mischief shall return on his own head, and his violent dealings shall come on his own pate:' these are pregnant evidences of God's just and wise providence; for 'the Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hand.'

All such occurrences, containing in them somewhat, if not downrightly miraculous, yet very admirable, in like manner deflecting from the stream of human affairs, as miracles do surmount the course of nature, most reasonably may, most justly should, be ascribed to the special operation of him, who 'only doeth wonderful things.'

2. Another character of special providence is, the seasonableness and suddenness of events. When that, which in itself is not ordinary, nor could well be expected, doth fall out happily, in the nick of an exigency, for the relief of innocence, the encouragement of goodness, the support of a good cause, the furtherance of any good purpose; (so that there is occasion to acknowlege with the prophet, 'thou didst terrible things, that we looked not for;') this is a shrewd indication that God's hand is then concerned; not only the event being notable, but the connexion thereof with circumstances of need being more admirable.

Thus in time of distress and despondency, when a man is utterly forlorn, and destitute of all visible relief, when, as the psalmist speaketh, 'refuge faileth him, and no man careth for his soul:' if then εὔκαιρος βοήθεια, 'an opportune succor' doth arrive; he is then unreasonable and ingrateful if he doth not avow a special providence, and thankfully ascribe that event unto him who is 'our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;' 'a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat;' 'the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.' This is that for which, in the 107th Psalm, the divine goodness is so magnificently celebrated; this is the burden of that pathe-

tical rapture, wherein we by repeated wishes and exhortations are instigated to bless God; his wonderfully relieving the children of men in their need and distress: this is that which God himself in the prophet representeth as a most satisfactory demonstration of his providence. 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them; I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys,' &c. 'That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.'

So also, when pestilent enterprises, managed by close fraud, or by impetuous violence, are brought to a head, and come near to the point of being executed; the sudden detection or seasonable obstruction of them do argue the ever vigilant eye and the all-powerful hand to be engaged: God ever doth see those deceitful workers of iniquity, laying their mischief in the dark; he is always present at their cabals and clandestine meetings, wherein they brood on it. He often doth suffer it to grow on to a pitch of maturity, till it be thoroughly formed, till it be ready to be hatched, and break forth in its mischievous effects; then in a trice he snappeth and crusheth it to nothing. God beholdeth violent men setting out in their unjust attempts, he letteth them proceed on in a full career, until they reach the edge of their design; then instantly he checketh, putteth in a spoke, he stoppeth, he tumbleth them down, or turneth them backward. Thus was Haman's plot dashed, when he had procured a royal decree, when he had fixed a time, when he had issued forth letters to destroy God's people. Thus was Pharaoh overwhelmed, when he had just overtaken the children of Israel. Thus were the designs of Abimelech, of Absalom, of Adonijah, of Sanballat nipped. Thus when Sennacherib with an unmatchable host had encamped against Jerusalem, and had to appearance swallowed it, God did 'put a hook into his nose, and turned him back into his own land.' Thus when Antiochus was marching on furiously to accomplish his threat of turning Jerusalem into a charnel, a noisome disease did intercept his progress. Thus when the profane Caligula did mean to dis-

charge his bloody rage on the Jews, for refusing to worship him, a domestic sword did presently give vent to his revengeful breath. Thus also, when Julian had by his policy and authority projected to overthrow our religion, his plot soon was quashed, and his life snapped away by an unknown hand. Thus, 'whenever the enemy doth come in like a flood,' (threatening immediately to overflow and overturn all things,) 'the Spirit of the Lord doth lift up a standard against him;' that is, God's secret efficacy doth suddenly restrain and repress his outrage. This usually is the method of divine providence. God could prevent the beginnings of wicked designs;* he could supplant them in their first onsets; he could any where sufflaminate and subvert them: but he rather winketh for a time, and suffereth the designers to go on, till they are mounted† to the top of confidence, and good people are cast on the brink of ruin; then ἀπὸ μηχανῆς,‡ surprisingly, unexpectedly he striketh in with effectual succor; so declaring how vain the presumption is of impious undertakers; how needful and sure his protection is over innocent people; how much reason the one hath to dread him, and the other to confide in him. Then is God seen, then his care and power will be acknowleged, when he snatcheth us from the jaws of danger, when 'our soul doth escape as a bird out of the snare of the fowler.'

3. Another character of special providence is, the great utility and beneficialness of occurrences, especially in regard to the public state of things, and to great personages, in whose welfare the public is much concerned. To entitle every petty chance that arriveth to special providence, may signify lightness; to father on God the mischiefs issuing from our sin and folly, may savor of profaneness; but to ascribe every grand§ and beneficial event unto his good hand, hath ever been reputed

* Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐκ προοιμίων, μηδὲ εὐθέως, ἔθος αὐτῷ τοιοῦτον, &c.—Vid. Chrys. ad Olymp.

† Ὅταν κορυφωθῇ, ὅταν αὐξηθῇ, &c.—Ibid.

‡ Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
Inciderit.

§ Magna dii curant, parva negligunt.—Cic. ii. de Nat. Deor.

wisdom and justice. "It hath been," saith Balbus in Cicero, 'a common opinion among the ancients, that whatever did bring great benefit to mankind, was never done without divine goodness toward men."* And well might they deem it so, seeing to do so is most agreeable to his nature, and appertaining to his charge, and may appear to be so by good argumentation *a priori*. For, that God doth govern our affairs, may be deduced from his essential attributes; and, consequently, that he doth in especial manner order these things, which are the most proper and worthy objects of his governance. God indeed doth not disregard any thing; he watcheth over the least things by his general and ordinary providence; so that nothing in nature may deviate from its course, or transgress the bounds prescribed to it. He thereby 'clotheth the grass of the field;' 'he provideth for the raven his food, and the young lions seek their meat from him;' without his care 'a sparrow doth not fall to the ground;' by it, 'all the hairs of our head are numbered.' But his more special hand of providence is chiefly employed in managing affairs of great moment and benefit to mankind; and peculiarly those which concern his people, who do profess to worship and serve him; whose welfare he tendereth with more than ordinary care and affection. He therefore hath a main stroke in all revolutions and changes of state: he presideth in all great counsels and undertakings; in the waging of war, in the settlement of peace; in the dispensation of victory and good success. He is peculiarly interested in the protection of princes, the chief 'ministers of his kingdom;' and in preservation of his people, the choice object of his care, from violent invasions, and treacherous surprises; so as to prevent disasters incident, or to deliver from them. 'It is he that,' as the psalmist saith, 'doth give salvation unto kings; who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.' It is he that continually 'keepeth Israel without ever sleeping, or slumbering;' who 'is the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof;' who 'is in the midst of her, that she shall

* Quicquid magnam utilitatem generi adferret humano, id non sine divina bonitate erga homines fieri arbitrabantur.—Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. ii.

not be moved;' who hath declared that 'he will keep her, and that right early;' that 'he will not cast off his people, nor forsake his inheritance;' that 'no weapon formed against his church shall prosper;' that 'salvation belongeth to the Lord, and his blessing is on his people.' When therefore any remarkable event, highly conducing to the public good of church and state, (supporting them in a good condition, or rescuing them from imminent danger,) doth appear, it is most reasonable and most just to ascribe the accomplishment thereof to God's hand. When any pernicious enterprise, levelled against the safety of prince and people, is disappointed, it is fit we should profess and say, 'The righteous Lord hath hewn the snares of the ungodly in pieces.'

4. Another like mark of special providence is, the righteousness of the case, or the advantage springing from events unto the maintenance of right, the vindication of innocence, the defence of truth, the encouragement of piety and virtue. God naturally is the judge of right, the guardian of innocence, the patron of truth, and promoter of goodness. 'The Lord is a refuge to the oppressed:' 'he is a father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow:' 'he will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor:' 'he executeth righteousness, and judgment for all that are oppressed:' 'he blesseth the righteous, and compasseth him with favor as with a shield:' 'he preserveth the souls of the righteous, and delivereth them out of the hand of the ungodly:' 'all his paths are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.' Whenever therefore right is oppressed, or perilously invaded; when innocence is grossly abused, or sorely beset; when piety is fiercely opposed, or cunningly undermined; when good men for the profession of truth, or the practice of virtue, are persecuted, or grievously threatened with mischief; then may we presume that God is not unconcerned, nor will prove backward to reach forth his succor. And when accordingly we find that signal aid or deliverance do then arrive, it is most reasonable to suppose that God particularly hath engaged himself, and exerted his power in their behalf. For seeing it is his proper and peculiar work, seeing it most becometh and behoveth him to appear in such cases, affording his helpful countenance;

when he doeth it, we should be ready to acknowlege it. In such a case, 'the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies,' saith the prophet.

5. Another character is, the correspondence of events to the prayers and desires of good men. For seeing it is the duty and constant practice of good men, in all exigencies to implore God's help; seeing such prayers have, as St. James telleth us, a mighty energy, it being God's property by them to be moved to impart his powerful assistance; seeing God most plainly and frequently hath declared, and obliged himself by promise, that he will hear them, so as to perform whatever is expedient in their behalf; seeing we have many notable experiments recorded in Scripture (as those of Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, Elias, Daniel, and the like) of prayers bringing down wonderful effects from heaven, with which the testimonies of all times and the daily experience of good men do conspire;* seeing the presumption of such efficacy is the main ground and encouragement of devotion: we have great reason, whenever events are answerable to such prayers, to ascribe the performance of them to God's hand: great reason we have in such cases to cry out with David, 'Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven, with the saving strength of his right hand:' just cause have we, according to his pattern, thankfully to acknowlege God's favor in answering our petitions; 'The king,' said he, 'shall joy in thy strength, O Lord, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! For thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the requests of his lips.'

6. Again, the proceedings of God (especially in way of judgment, or of dispensing rewards and punishments) discover their original by their kind and countenance, which usually do bear a near resemblance, or some significant correspondence, to the actions on which they are grounded. 'Punishments,'

* Πόσαι μυριάδες ἀνδρῶν καὶ φάλαγγες, ὅσας ἱκετεύοντες μόνον ἡμεῖς, καὶ Θεὸς βουληθεὶς κατειργάσατο;—Naz. Orat. 4.

How many myriads and squadrons of men were there, whom we only praying, and God willing, discomfited? saith Nazianzene in reference to the defeating of Julian's design.

saith a Father, 'are the forced offsprings of willing faults:' and answerably, rewards are the children of good deeds: and God, who formeth both, doth commonly order it so, that the children in their complexion and features shall resemble their parents. So that the deserts of men shall often be legible in the recompences conferred or inflicted on them: not according to the natural result of their practice, but with a comely reference thereto; apt to raise in them a sense of God's hand, and to wring from them an acknowlegement of his equity in so dealing with them. So when humble modesty is advanced to honor, and ambitious confidence is thrown into disgrace; when liberality is blessed with increase, and avarice is cursed with decay of estate; when craft incurreth disappointment, and simplicity findeth good success; when haughty might is shattered, and helpless innocence is preserved; when the calumnious tongue is blistered, 'the flattering lips are cut off,' the blasphemous throat is torn out; when bloody oppressors have 'blood given them to drink,' and come to welter in their own gore; (an accident which almost continually doth happen;) when treacherous men by their own confidents, or by themselves, are betrayed; when retaliations of vengeance are ministered, extorting confessions like to that of Adoni-bezek, 'As I have done, so God hath requited me;' deserving such exprobrations as that of Samuel to Agag, 'As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women;' grounding such reflexions as that concerning Antiochus, 'Thus the murderer and blasphemer having suffered most grievously, as he entreated other men, so died he a miserable death;' by such occurrences the finger of God doth point out and indicate itself; they speak themselves immediately to come from that just God, who doth *ἀνταποδιδόναι*, render to men answerably to their doings; who payeth men their due, sometimes in value, often *in specie*, according to the strictest way of reckoning. 'He,' as the prophet saith, 'is great in counsel, and mighty in work: for his eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings.' This indeed is a sort of administration most conformable to God's exact justice, and most conducible to his holy designs of instructing and correcting offenders. He there-

fore hath declared it to be his way. 'It is,' (saith the prophet, directing his speech to the instruments of divine vengeance on Babylon,) 'the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance on her; as she hath done, do unto her.' And, 'the day of the Lord' (saith another prophet, concerning the like judgment on Edom,) 'is near on all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return on thine own head.' Thereby doth God mean to declare himself the Judge and Governor of men: for, 'I will,' saith he in Ezekiel, 'do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the Lord.' Farther,

7. Another argument of special providence is, the harmonious conspiracy of various accidents to one end or effect. If that one thing should hit advantageously to the production of some considerable event, it may with some plausibility be attributed to fortune, or common providence: yet that divers things, having no dependence or coherence one with the other, in divers places, through several times, should all join their forces to compass it, cannot well otherwise than be ascribed to God's special care wisely directing, to his own hand powerfully wielding, those concurrent instruments to one good purpose. For it is beside the nature, it is beyond the reach of fortune, to range various causes in such order. Blind fortune cannot apprehend or catch the seasons and junctures of things, which arise from the motions of causes in their nature indifferent and arbitrary: to it therefore no such event can reasonably be imputed. So to the bringing about our Lord's passion, (that great event, which is so particularly assigned to God's hand,) we may observe the monstrous treachery of Judas, the strange malignity of the Jewish rulers, the prodigious levity of the people, the wonderful easiness of Pilate, with other notable accidents, to have jumped in order thereto. So also that a malicious traitor should conceive kindness toward any, that he should be mistaken in the object of his favor, that he should express his mind in a way subject to deliberate examination, in terms apt to breed suspicion where the plot was laid; that the counsellors should despise it, and yet not smother it; that the king instantly, by a light darted into his mind, should descry it: these things so happily meeting, may argue God (who

mouldeth the hearts, who guideth the hands, who enlighteneth the minds of men) to have been engaged in the detection of this day's black conspiracy.

Such are some characters of special providence; each of which singly appearing in any occurrence would in a considerate man breed an opinion thereof; each of them being very congruous to the supposition of it; no such appearances being otherwise so clearly and cleverly explicable, as by assigning the divine hand for their principal cause. But the connexion of them all in one event (when divers odd accidents do befal at a seasonable time, according to exigency for the public benefit, the preservation of princes, the security of God's people, the protection of right, the maintenance of truth and piety, according to the wishes and prayers of good men, with proper retribution and vengeance on the wretched designers of mischief; such a complication, I say, of these marks in one event) may thoroughly suffice to raise a firm persuasion, to force a confident acknowlegement concerning God's providence, in any considerate and ingenuous person: it readily will dispose such persons on any such occasion to say, 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.'

Notwithstanding therefore any obscurity or intricacy that sometime may appear in the course of Providence, notwithstanding any general exceptions that may by perverse incredulity be alleged against the conduct of things, there are good marks observable, whereby (if we are not very blockish, drowsy, supine, lazy, or froward; if we will consider wisely, with industrious attention and care, with minds pure from vain prejudices, and corrupt affections) we may discern and understand God's doing. Which to do is the first duty specified in my text: on which having insisted so largely, I shall (hoping you will favor me with a little patience) briefly touch the rest.

II. It is the duty of us all, on such remarkable occurrences of Providence, to fear God: 'all men,' it is said, 'shall fear.' It is our duty in such cases to be affected with all sorts of fear: with a fear of awful dread, with a fear of hearty reverence, with a fear of sober caution; yea, sometimes with a fear of dejecting consternation. When God doth appear 'clad with his robes of vengeance and zeal,' denouncing and dis-

charging judgment; when he representeth himself 'fearful in praises, terrible in his doings toward the children of men,' 'working terrible things in righteousness;' it should strike into our hearts a dread of his glorious majesty, of his mighty power, of his severe justice, of 'his glorious and fearful name:' it should instil into our minds a reverence of his excellent wisdom, his exceeding goodness, his perfect holiness: it should breed in our souls a solicitous care of displeasing and provoking him: it should cause us in our hearts to shake and tremble before him. Then is that of the psalmist to be put in practice, 'let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.' 'Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.' Such dispensations are in their nature declarative of those divine attributes which do require such affections: they are set before our eyes to cast us into a very serious and solemn frame; to abash and deter us from offending, by observing the danger of incurring punishments like to those which we behold inflicted on presumptuous transgressors; on those who do heinously violate right, or furiously impugn truth, or profanely despise piety; who earnestly prosecute wicked enterprises; who persecute the friends of God with outrageous violence, or treacherous subtilty. On infliction of such punishments, 'all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously,' saith God himself, declaring the nature and drift of them. They do plainly demonstrate that there is no presuming to escape being detected in our close machinations by God's all-seeing eye; being defeated in our bold attempts by God's almighty hand; being sorely chastised for our iniquity by God's impartial judgment. Extremely blind and stupid therefore must we be, or monstrously sturdy and profane, if such experiments of divine power and justice do not awe us, and fright us from sin. 'When the lion roareth, who will not fear?' 'When the trumpet is blown in the city, shall not the people be afraid?' Shall he, at whom 'the mountains quake, and the hills melt;' whose 'indignation the nations are not able to abide;' at whose 'wrath the earth doth shake and tremble;' at whose 'reproof the pillars of heaven are astonished;' shall he visibly frown, shall his wrath flame out, shall

he shake his rod of exemplary vengeance over us, and we stand void of sense or fear? If so, then surely a brutish dotage, or a gigantic stoutness doth possess us.

III. We are in such cases obliged to 'declare God's work:' that is, openly to acknowlege and avow, to applaud and celebrate the special providence of God, with his adorable perfections displayed in such events; to the glory of God's name, in expression of our reverence and gratitude toward him, for the common edification of men; for which uses they greatly serve, to which purposes they are designed. We should not view such providential occurrences, like dumb beasts, with a dull or careless silence, as if we did not mind them, or were not concerned in them: we should not suppress or stifle the knowlege of them in our breasts, as if they were barely matters of private consideration and use; we should not let our observation and resentment of them be fruitless, so as to yield no honor to God, no benefit to man. But we should propagate and convey them into others: in so loud a tone, in so lively a strain we should vent them, as thereby to excite the notice, to inflame the affections of all men within the reach of our voice; provoking them to conspire with us in acknowlegement of God's power and wisdom, in acclamation to his justice and goodness. This is the due improvement of our glory; that peculiar excellency, wherein chiefly (except in our reason) we do surpass all creatures; that without which our reason itself is more than half unprofitable; that whereby we put our best member to its best use. For this we have the devout psalmist's pious resolutions, his exemplary performances, his zealous wishes, his earnest exhortations to guide and move us. 'I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. Men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatness.' 'They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power.' So did he signify his resolution. 'I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.' So his conscience testified of his practice. 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men: that they would offer the sacrifice of

thanksgiving, and declare his works with gladness.' So doth he pour forth his desire. 'O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.' 'Sing unto the Lord, bless his name: show forth his salvation from day to day.' 'Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.' 'Come and see the works of God.' 'Sing forth the honor of his name, make his praise glorious.' 'O give thanks unto the Lord; call on his name; make known his deeds among the people.' So doth he summon, so doth he urge us to this practice; and in his deportment we may see our duty.

IV. It is peculiarly the duty and practice of good men on such occasions to feel and to express religious joy. 'The righteous shall be glad in the Lord.' Good men indeed then have great matter, and much cause, on many accounts, to be glad.

It becometh them to rejoice, as having an universal complacence in God's proceedings, as gratefully relishing all dispensations of Providence. They, as pious, are disposed to bless and praise God for all things incident, and cannot therefore but rejoice; joy being an inseparable companion of gratitude and praise. Hence, 'light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.' Hence, 'the voice of salvation and rejoicing is in the tabernacles of the righteous.' Hence, 'rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright;' is an exhortation backed with a very good reason.

They cannot but find satisfaction in observing God's providence notably discovered, to the confirmation of their faith, and cherishing their hopes; together with the conviction of infidelity, and confusion of profaneness. 'Our heart,' saith the psalmist, 'shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.' 'I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation.' 'The righteous shall see it, and rejoice; and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.'

It is to them no small pleasure to behold God's holy perfections illustriously shining forth; and the glory of him (who is the principal object of their love, their reverence, their hope, and confidence) to be conspicuously advanced. 'Rejoice,'

saith the psalmist, 'O ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.' 'Zion heard, and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of thy judgments, O Lord.' 'For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth.'

It is to them ground of exceeding comfort, to receive so clear pledges of God's love and favor, his truth and fidelity, his bounty and munificence toward them, expressed in such watchful care over them, such protection in dangers, such aid in needs, such deliverance from mischiefs vouchsafed to them. Such benefits they cannot receive from God's hand, without that cheerfulness which always doth adhere to gratitude.* 'I will,' saith David, 'sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.' 'Because thou hast been my helper, therefore in the shadow of thy wings I will rejoice.' 'My lips shall greatly rejoice in thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.' 'I will be glad, and rejoice in thy mercy; for thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my soul in adversities.' 'The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' 'Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them.'

They are also greatly refreshed with apprehension of the happy fruits sprouting from such dispensations of Providence: such as are the benefit of mankind, the peace and prosperity of the civil state, the preservation, settlement, enlargement, advancement of God's church, the support of right, the succor of innocence, the maintenance of truth, the encouragement and furtherance of piety; the restraint of violence, the discountenance of error, the correction of vice and impiety. In these things they, as faithful servants of God, and real friends of goodness, as bearing hearty good-will and compassion to mankind, as true lovers of their country, as living and sensible members of the church, cannot but rejoice. Seeing by these things their own best interest, (which is no other than the advantage of goodness,) their chief honor, (which consists in the promotion of divine glory,) their truest content, (which is placed in the prosperity of Sion,) are highly furthered; how can they look

* Sen. de Benef. ii. 22. Cum accipiendum judicaverimus, hilares accipiamus, profitentes gaudium, &c.—Vid. ib. 30.

on them springing up, without great delight and complacence? 'O,' saith the psalmist, 'sing unto the Lord—for he hath done marvellous things. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.' And 'sing, O heavens,' crieth the prophet, 'and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O ye mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy on his afflicted.' And, 'when,' saith he, 'ye shall see this, (the comfort of God's people,) your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall florish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.'

Even in the frustration of wicked designs, attended with severe execution of vengeance on the contrivers and abettors of them, they may have a pleasant satisfaction; they must then yield a cheerful applause to divine justice. 'The righteous,' saith the psalmist, 'shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance:' and, 'let the wicked,' saith he, 'perish at the presence of God; but let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.' Whence, at God's infliction of judgment on Babylon, it is said in Jeremy, 'then the heaven, and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon;' and at the fall of mystical Babylon, in the Apocalypse it is likewise said, 'Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.' Farther,

V. The next duty prescribed to good men in such case is, to 'trust in God,' that is, to have their affiance in God (on all such like occasions, in all urgencies of need) settled, improved, and corroborated thereby. This indeed is the proper end, immediately regarding us, of God's special providence, disclosing itself in any miraculous or in any remarkable way; to nourish in well-disposed minds that faith in God which is the root of all piety, and ground of devotion. Such experiments are sound arguments to persuade good men that God doth govern and order things for their best advantage; they are powerful incentives, driving them in all exigencies to seek God's help; they are most convincing evidences that God is abundantly able,

very willing, and ever ready to succor them. 'They,' saith the psalmist, 'that know thy name will put their trust in thee; for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.' And, 'I,' saith he, 'will abide in thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings: for thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.' It is indeed a great aggravation of diffidence in God, that having 'tasted and seen that the Lord is good;' having felt so manifest experience of divine goodness; having received so notable pledges of God's favorable inclination to help us; we yet will not rely on him. As a friend, who by signal instances of kindness hath assured his good-will, hath great cause of offence if he be suspected of unwillingness in a needful season to afford his relief: so may God most justly be displeased, when we, (notwithstanding so palpable demonstrations of his kindness,) by distrusting him, do in effect question the sincerity of his friendship, or the constancy of his goodness toward us.

VI. Good men on such occasions should glory: 'all the upright in heart shall glory.' Should glory, that is, in contemplation of such providences feeling sprightly elevations of mind and transports of affection, they should exhibit triumphant demonstrations of satisfaction and alacrity. It becometh them not in such cases to be dumpish or demure; but jocund and crank in their humor, brisk and gay in their looks, pleasantly flippant and free in their speech, jolly and debonair in their behavior; every way signifying the extreme complacency they take in God's doing, and the full content they taste in their state. They with solemn exultation should triumph in such events, as in victories achieved by the glorious hand of God in their behalf, in approbation of their cause, in favor toward their persons, for their great benefit and comfort. They may (not as proudly assuming to themselves the glory due to God, but as gratefully sensible of their felicity springing from God's favor) *se jactare, se laudibus efferre*, (as the Hebrew word doth signify;) that is, in a sort boast, and commend themselves as very happy in their relation to God, by virtue of his protection and aid. They may (not with a haughty insolence, or wanton arrogance, but

with a sober confidence and cheerfulness) insult on baffled impiety,* by their expressions and demeanor upbraiding the folly, the baseness, the impotency and wretchedness thereof, in competition with the wisdom, in opposition to the power of God, their friend and patron. For such carriage in such cases we have the practice and the advice of the psalmist to warrant and direct us. 'In God,' saith he, 'we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever.' 'Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work; and I will triumph in the works of thy hands.' 'We will rejoice in thy salvation; and in the name of our God we will set up our banners.' 'Glory ye in his holy name; let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.' 'Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.' 'Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy name, and to triumph in thy praise.' Such should be the result (on us) of God's merciful dispensations toward his people.

I shall only farther remark that the word here used is by the Greek rendered, ἐπαινεθήσονται, 'they shall be praised:' which sense the original will bear, and the reason of the case may admit. For such dispensations ever do adorn integrity, and yield commendation to good men. They declare the wisdom of such persons, in adhering to God, in reposing on God's help, in embracing such courses which God doth approve and bless: they plainly tell how dear such persons are to God; how incomparably happy in his favor, how impregnably safe under his protection; as having his infallible wisdom and his invincible power engaged on their side. This cannot but render them admirable, and their state glorious in the eyes of all men; inducing them to profess with the psalmist, 'Happy is the people, which is in such a case; yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.' And of such a people, that declaration from the same mouth is verified, 'In thy name shall they rejoice all the day long, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted: for thou art the glory of their strength, and in thy favor their horn shall be exalted.'

* Psal. lii. 6. 7. The righteous shall laugh at him, (or, deride him, in this manner;) Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength.

Such are the duties suggested in our text, as suiting these occasions, when God in a special manner hath vouchsafed to protect his people, or to rescue them from imminent mischiefs, by violent assault or by fraudulent contrivance levelled against them. I should apply these particulars to the present case solemnised by us: but I shall rather recommend the application to your sagacity, than farther infringe your patience, by spending thereon so many words as it would exact. You do well know the story, which by so many years repetition hath been impressed on your minds: and by reflecting thereon,

You will easily discern how God, in the seasonable discovery of this execrable plot, (the masterpiece of wicked machinations ever conceived in human brain, or devised on this side hell, since the foundation of things,) in the happy deliverance of our nation and church from the desperate mischiefs intended toward them, in the remarkable protection of right and truth, did signalise his providence.

You will be affected with hearty reverence toward the gracious author of our salvation, and with humble dread toward the just awarder of vengeance on those miscreant wretches, who 'digged this pit and fell into it themselves.'

You will be ready with pious acknowlegement and admiration of God's mercy, his justice, his wisdom, to declare and magnify this notable work done by him among us.

You must needs feel devout resentments of joy for the glory arising to God, and the benefits accruing to us in the preservation of God's anointed, our just sovereign, with his royal posterity: in the freeing our country from civil broils, disorders, and confusions; from the yokes of usurpation and slavery; from grievous extortions and rapines; from bloody persecutions and trials, with the like spawn of disastrous and tragical consequences, by this design threatened on it: in upholding our church (which was so happily settled, and had so long gloriously florished) from utter ruin: in securing our profession of God's holy truth, the truly catholic faith of Christ, (refined from those drossy alloys, wherewith the rudeness and sloth of blind times, the fraud of ambition and covetous designers, the pravity of sensual and profane men had embased and corrupted it,) together with a pure worship of God, an edifying

administration of God's word and sacraments, a comely, wholesome, and moderate discipline, conformable to divine prescription and primitive example; in rescuing us from having impious errors, scandalous practices, and superstitious rites, with merciless violence obtruded on us: in continuing therefore to us the most desirable comforts and conveniences of our lives.

You farther considering this signal testimony of divine goodness, will thereby be moved to hope and confide in God for his gracious preservation from the like pernicious attempts against the safety of our prince and welfare of our country, against our peace, our laws, our religion; especially from Romish zeal and bigotry, (that mint of woful factions and combustions, of treasonable conspiracies, of barbarous massacres, of horrid assassinations, of intestine rebellions, of foreign invasions, of savage tortures and butcheries, of 'holy leagues and pious frauds,' through Christendom, and particularly among us,) which as it without reason damneth, so it would by any means destroy all that will not crouch thereto.

You will, in fine, with joyous festivity, glory and triumph in this illustrious demonstration of God's favor toward us; so as heartily to join in those due acclamations of blessing and praise.

'Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.'

'Alleluiah; salvation, and glory, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments.'

'Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints.'

'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.'

SUMMARY OF SERMON XII.

PSALM CXXXII.—VERSE 16.

THE context given: exordium on the joyful and solemn rite which this discourse is intended to celebrate: occasion and general importance of the text. The particular promise now to be treated of; in which may be observed, 1. the Promiser, *I:* 2. the persons especially concerned in the promise, *her priests:* 3. the thing promised, *clothing with salvation.*

I. The Promiser, *I;* that is, the Lord, the most true, constant, and powerful God, *whose words are right, and all whose works are done in truth; who will not break his covenant, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips,* &c. On his glorious attributes and perfections we rely for the performance of his promises.

II. The persons whom the promise mainly regards, *her priests;* that is, persons peculiarly devoted to and employed in sacred matters, &c. And *her priests,* that is, the priests of *Sion;* of that Sion, which *the Lord hath chosen,* which he hath resolved *to rest and reside in for ever:* whence it appears that the priests and pastors of the Christian church are hereby, if not solely, at least principally designed. This confirmed by the following arguments: 1. because the covenant here mentioned is not (as to its main parts) of a conditional or temporary nature, but absolute and perpetual, and must therefore respect the Christian church, that of the Jews having long since been overthrown: this enlarged on. 2. The completion of this individual promise is by the prophets foretold, and expressed

by the evangelists, to appertain to the times of the gospel: this point commented on and explained. 3. That by the Sion here mentioned is not chiefly meant that material mountain in Judea, but rather that mystical rock of divine grace and truth on which the Christian church, the only everlasting temple of God, is seated, is more than probable from the constant acceptation of it in this sense by the prophets, &c.: this shown. 4. The manner of the delivery of this covenant, and its confirmation by the divine oath, argues the unconditional, irreversible, and perpetual constitution of it: see Heb. vi. 7. Hence we may conclude that this promise principally belongs, and shall infallibly be made good to the Christian priesthood. Corollary from the preceding part of this discourse, that the title of *priest* deserves not the reproach that is sometimes profanely and unjustly cast on it.

III. The matter of the promise, *clothing with salvation:* where it may be observed, first, that the usual metaphor of being *clothed*, denotes in the sacred dialect a complete endowment with, a plentiful enjoyment of, or an intire application to, that thing or quality with which a person is said to be clothed: this explained. Secondly, what is the *salvation* here mentioned? Salvation, when used absolutely, signifies properly in the Hebrew, a deliverance from, or removal of all sorts of inconvenience, and consequently an affluence of all good things; in effect, the same which other languages call *felicity* and *prosperity:* this point enlarged on; whence it is deduced that though the supreme accomplishment of all happiness, the enjoyment of perfect bliss in heaven, be agreeable to the Jewish acceptation of the word, yet temporal and external welfare, conspicuous and visible in this world, is not excluded: this enlarged on. The least that we can imagine here promised to the *priests of Sion* comprehends these three things: 1. a free and safe condition of life, that they shall enjoy good security, liberty, and tranquillity: 2. a provision of

competent subsistence, so that they shall be furnished with such reasonable supplies as may encourage them in the cheerful performance of their duty: 3. a suitable degree of respect, and a station among men which may commend them to general esteem, and vindicate them from contempt. All this according to the most moderate interpretation, the phrase implies; and on it we may confidently rely. This confidence may be improved by considering the reasons that might induce Almighty God to resolve and promise thus favorably to his priests. These comprised under three heads. 1. It concerns God's honor. 2. The good of the church requires it. 3. Equity and the reason of the case exacts it. The preacher's apology for pleading in behalf of the sacred order of which he is a member. It is said then,

I. God's honor is concerned, &c. They are in a peculiar manner his *servants*, (Joel ii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 24.) not like ordinary Christians, but by way of excellency so styled. They are his *stewards* (Tit. i. 7.). If the church be *God's house*, and the priests the stewards of that house, it is surely no mean station which they obtain therein. They are also *builders* of that house (1 Cor. iii. 10.); *co-operators* with God (1 Cor. iii. 9.); and, lastly, his *ambassadors*, delegated by him to treat of peace, and to solicit a fair correspondence between heaven and earth (2 Cor. v. 20.). The propriety and dignity of this character enlarged on. Illustration of this dignity from that of human government.

It is not a matter of slight consideration how plentiful a provision was made for his priests by the Almighty, in that policy which he himself framed, and of which he constituted himself the head. And though we are not in all cases obliged punctually to follow those political prescriptions, yet is the reason of them perpetual, and the example to be reverenced, especially since the custom of all times in some measure conspires to support it. Instances of extraordinary honor paid to

priests, through reverence of the Deity, in the cases of Melchizedek, Potipherah, Jethro, and Aaron.

The Egyptian Hierophantæ, Persian Magi, Gaulish Druids, caliphs and muftis of the Mahometans, being passed over, the peculiar veneration paid to their priests by the wise and valiant Romans is dilated on. Exordium of Cicero's oration *ad Pontifices* introduced. Example of our own magnanimous ancestors on the same point considered.

II. The good of the church requires that the priesthood be well protected, well provided for, and well regarded. That men may be converted from iniquity, and brought to the sincere practice of virtue, is the chief good of the church, that to which the favor of God is annexed: and this good mainly depends, partly on the due execution of the priestly office, partly on the fit disposition of the people to comply therewith; to both which effects the comfortable estate of the priesthood is requisite. The priest must be capable to instruct with advantage, and the people disposed to learn; but what alacrity can he be master of, whose mind is continually distracted by care and grief, the inseparable companions of a needy state? whose spirit is dejected with constant regret and frequent disappointments; who is perplexed with the difficulties, and incumbered with the varieties of secular business. The priests' lips are expected to speak with boldness and authority; but how can necessary courage be cherished in the breast of him who grovels on the ground, and crouches under a load of want and disgrace?

But admit it possible that such a man may be equal to this; that although extremely indigent, he may be sufficiently resolute: with what regard will his free and faithful advice be entertained? Will not his moderate confidence be accounted impudence, and his open sincerity of speech be styled unmannerly presumption? This point enlarged on.

Almighty God, that he might conciliate credit unto, and

infuse a persuasive energy into the words of his prophets and apostles, was pleased to distinguish them by extraordinary gifts. Where such extraordinary commendations are wanting, it is reasonable that the deficiency should be supplied by ordinary and probable expedients.

It might be added, that a necessitous and despicable estate commonly not only disturbs the mind and renders the spirits dejected, but makes men peevish, greedy, and covetous, tempting them to unworthy courses.

Also that priests confer good on the state, which is secured by the sincere instruction of men in the duties of obedience, justice, and fidelity. Seeing therefore that the good of the church, on various accounts, is so much concerned in the welfare of the priests, it is very fitting they should have encouragement and respect. Concluding serious admonition on this head, from Heb. xiii. 17.

III. Common equity and the reason of the case exacts that safety, competent subsistence, and fitting respect be allowed to the priests. If their personal qualities, commonly resulting from a liberal, sober education in the schools of wisdom and good discipline, be considered, who better deserve such treatment?

True worth is not confined to any particular order of men; yet none would be wronged, if it were said that worth is to be found no where more plentifully than in that of the priesthood. What is it which advances men's nature, and adorns their minds? Is it knowlege? *The priests' lips preserve it.* Is it virtue? Whence have greater examples of it proceeded than from among them? Is it piety? It is their proper business to promote it.

Faults they have had, and will always have; for they are but men, and subject to the common imperfections of a mortal nature; but perhaps if it were seemly to make comparisons, it might be shown without difficulty that they have fewer and less than any other distinct body of men, &c.

But to waive this plea, consider their employment. Is there any office attended with more wearisome toil, solicitous care, and tedious attendance? whence they are deservedly called *watchmen* and *shepherds:* these points enlarged on. Report of Maximinus by Eusebius, that *he commanded only the governors of the church to be slaughtered, as authors of the growth and prevalence of evangelical doctrine.* Nor is the practice of that tyrant singular; for they generally fall the first sacrifices to outrageous persecution.

Is it not reasonable then that they, who for the service of God and benefit of the church undergo such difficulties, and are exposed to such hazards, should be sustained and refreshed by proportionable encouragements? This topic enlarged on. The nature of their profession also considered, which secludes them from all ordinary means of temporal advancement.

Reflexions on the reasonableness, and goodness, and wisdom of Almighty God in undertaking the protection, and asserting the honor of his priests; which, together with a consideration that he has hitherto done so, may strengthen our reliance on his promise.

Conduct of Christians in the first ages of Christianity, ages not more dismal for suffering, than glorious for piety, considered. How passionately did they then love their pastors! how cheerfully did they contribute, out of a slender stock or spoiled fortune, to their maintenance! &c. Conduct of Christians in the succeeding times, when Christianity shone forth out of the scattered clouds of persecution: how the joyful acclamations of the faithful people resounded in praise of their victorious champions! and how did the emperors themselves, with outstretched arms and hearts enlarged, embrace the authors of their happy conversion, and rescind all laws prejudicial to their welfare! and this occurred not only in the Roman empire, but in other nations which afterwards embraced

Christianity; as in the case of the Goths, Vandals, Lombards, &c.

And ever since, whilst they have been the guardians of the safety of others, they have not themselves been deprived of protection; have abounded rather than wanted; have been cherished by princes and nobles, who have relied on their advice, and intrusted them with their highest concerns.

It is true that God's promise is not affixed to all parts of time, to all particularities of place, to all determinate circumstances of things. The priests may now and then suffer, be plundered, ejected; but they may also be soon restored, repossessed, and re-advanced, &c. God may for a while hide his face from us, but he will not for ever turn his back on us: the honor of the priesthood may for a while be eclipsed in some part of the world; but it shall never suffer a total eclipse, nor be swallowed up in a perpetual night.

SERMON XII.

A CONSECRATION SERMON.*

PSALM CXXXII.—VERSE 16.

I will also clothe her priests with salvation.

THE context runs thus: 'The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set on thy throne. If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit on thy throne for evermore. For the Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud,' &c.

If all, not only inaugurations of persons, but dedications even of inanimate things to some extraordinary use, hath been usually attended with especial significations of joy and festival solemnity; with great reason the consecration of a person to so high and sacred a function as that of a Christian bishop, (that is, of a prince, or principal pastor in God's church,) requires most peculiar testimonies of our gratulation and content: the face of things ought then to be serene and cheerful; the thoughts of men benign and favorable; the words comfortable and auspicious, that are uttered on such occasion. And that ours at

* Henry the Seventh's chapel, July 4, 1663, at the Bishop of Man's consecration.

present should be such, the subject as well as the season of our discourse doth require. Words few, but pregnant, and affording ample matter for our best affections to work on: and which more particularly will engage us, both to a hearty thankfulness for past benefits, and to a confident expectation of future blessings; while they acquaint us with the ancient exhibition of a gracious promise, remind us of the faithful performance thereof hitherto, and assure us of its certain accomplishment for the future. The occasion whereof was this:

King David, moved by a devout inclination to promote God's honor, and benefit the church, had vowed to build a magnificent temple, imploring God's propitious concurrence with, and approbation of, his design. Whereon Almighty God not only declares his acceptance of that pious resolution, but rewards it with a bountiful promise, consisting of two parts; one conditional, relating to David's children and posterity, that they in an uninterrupted succession should for ever enjoy the royal dignity, in case they did constantly persist in observing his covenant, and the testimonies that he should teach them; the other more absolute, that however, what he chiefly intended concerning God's established worship and the perpetual welfare of the church, God would have an especial care that it should fully and certainly be accomplished: that he would for ever fix his residence in Sion; that he would protect and prosper it, and all that did belong thereto; especially those that did most need his favor and assistance, the poor, the priests, and the saints, (or 'gentle ones.') This is briefly the importance of the general promise wherein is comprehended that particular one whereon we are to treat: and in which we may observe,

1. The promiser, 'I.'

2. The persons who are especially concerned in the promise, 'her priests.'

3. The thing promised, 'clothing with salvation.'

1. I say, the promiser, 'I:' that is, the Lord; the most true, the most constant, the most powerful God; most true and sincere in the declaration of his purpose, most constant and immutable in the prosecution, most powerful and uncontrollable in the perfect execution thereof: whose 'words are right,

and all whose works are done in truth:' who 'will not break his covenant, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips:' whose 'counsel shall stand, and who will do all his pleasure.' These glorious attributes and perfections of his, so often celebrated in holy writ, do ground our reliance on all God's promises, and do oblige us, notwithstanding the greatest improbabilities or difficulties objected, to believe the infallible performance of this.

II. The persons whom the promise mainly regards, 'her priests.' Priests, that is, persons peculiarly devoted to, and employed in, sacred matters; distinguished expressly from the poor, (that is, other meek and humble persons;) and from the saints, (that is, all other good and religious men.) And, *her* priests; that is, the priests of Sion: of that Sion which 'the Lord hath chosen;' which 'he hath desired for his permanent habitation;' which he hath resolved to 'rest and reside in for ever.' Whence it plainly enough follows that the priests and pastors of the Christian church are hereby, if not solely, yet principally designed. Which interpretation, because it is in a manner the foundation of our subsequent discourse, and by some it may perhaps not be readily admitted, I shall endeavor farther to confirm by these few arguments.

1. Because the covenant here mentioned is not, as to the main parts thereof, of a conditional or temporary nature, but absolute and perpetual; and must therefore be understood to respect the Christian church: (that of the Jews being long since rejected, their temple demolished, their Sion utterly forsaken.) For although one particular contained therein, concerning the continual succession of David's posterity in the regal authority over Israel, hath a condition explicitly annexed; (and, consequently, the effects depending on the performance of that condition were contingent and mutable;) yet all the rest of this covenant (or promise) is conceived in terms peremptory and expressly importing perpetuity. 'This is my rest for ever,' עדי עד, that is, as the Greek translators render it, *εἰς αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος*, (*in seculum seculi*,) that is, to the end of this world; as *εἰς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων* denotes the end of all worlds, or the most perfect sempiternity. And that it doth really in this case denote a proper and unlimited perpetuity, is

also evident by those explications thereof in the eighty-ninth Psalm, where the very same covenant is, as to some parts thereof, more largely recorded. ‘ Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David: his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me: it shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.’ No words can express more fully a perpetual duration, or at least one co-extended with the duration of the world, than those do. And the prophet Jeremy, referring also to this very covenant, and particularly to this very clause thereof, thus expresses the matter: ‘ Thus saith the Lord; If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign on his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.’ But farther,

2. The completion of this individual promise is both by the prophets foretold, and expressed by the evangelists, to appertain to the times of the gospel. Ye heard even now the words of Jeremy, which are by him applied to those times, when God would cause ‘ the branch of righteousness’ (that is, Jesus of Nazareth, our blessed Saviour) ‘ to grow up unto David, who should execute judgment and righteousness in the land.’ ‘ In those days,’ saith he farther, ‘ shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called,’ (or rather, ‘ which he shall be called,’ as not only the vulgar Latin and the Greek interpreters, but the Chaldee also read it,) ‘ THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ Likewise in the fifty-fifth of Isaiah, God thus invites the Gentiles: ‘ Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David:’ that is, I will ratify that everlasting covenant, which, in your behalf, I once made with David, and will confer on you those favors which I faithfully promised him; relating to this very promise also. For both in Solomon’s prayer, (2 Chron. vi.) which in all probability was indited about the same time, and on the same occasion with this Psalm, and in the eighty-ninth Psalm, the benefits of the same covenant are called ‘ the mercies of David.’ ‘ O Lord

God, turn not away the face of thine anointed, remember the mercies of David thy servant,' saith Solomon: and, 'My mercy,' saith God, 'will I keep with him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him:' and, 'My faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him;' that is, 'my faithful (or sure) mercy;' τὰ ὅσια πιστὰ, as the LXX. and St. Paul with them in the Acts, render this place of Isaiah. And in the song of Zachary we have one passage of this promise cited, and applied to the times of the gospel: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed his people; and hath raised up a horn of salvation in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets:' viz. by the mouth of this prophetical psalmist here, where it is said, 'There will I make the horn of David to bud;' and in the parallel Psalm lxxxix. 'In my name shall his horn be exalted.' To omit those many places where our Saviour, in correspondence to this promise, is affirmed to 'possess the throne of his father David,' and 'to rule over the house of Jacob for ever.' Moreover,

3. That by the Sion here mentioned is not chiefly meant that material mountain in Judea, but rather that mystical rock of divine grace and evangelical truth, on which the Christian church, the only everlasting temple of God, is unmoveably seated, is very probable, (or rather manifestly certain,) by the prophets' constant acception thereof in this sense, when they assign the character of perpetual durability thereto. As in Isaiah lx. where he thus prophecies of the Christian church: 'The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee The city of the Lord, The Sion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee; I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of kings,' &c. And the prophet Micah, speaking of 'the last days' (that is, of the evangelical times, 'when the mountain of the house of the Lord should be established in the top of the mountains,') saith thus: 'And I will make her that halted, a remnant; and her that was cast far

off, a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Sion from henceforth even for ever.' And the prophet Joel, speaking of the same times, (when God 'would pour out his spirit on all flesh,') hath these words: 'So shall ye know, that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Sion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.' All which places no man can reasonably doubt, and all Christians do firmly consent to respect the Christian church. To which we may add that passage of the author to the Hebrews, (ch. xii. ver. 22.) 'But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem:' that is, to the Christian church.

4. The manner of this covenant's delivery, and confirmation by the divine oath, argues the inconditionate, irreversible, and perpetual constitution thereof; for to God's most absolute and immutable decrees this most august and solemn confirmation doth peculiarly agree. So the Apostle to the Hebrews seems to intimate: 'Wherein,' saith he, 'God, willing more abundantly to demonstrate the immutability of his counsel, (ἐπιδεῖξαι τὸ ἀμετάθετον τῆς βουλῆς,) interposed an oath.'

We may therefore, I suppose, on these grounds, solidly and safely conclude that this promise doth principally belong, and shall therefore infallibly be made good, to the Christian priesthood; to those who, in the Christian church, by offering spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, by directing and instructing the people in the knowlege of the evangelical law, by imploring for and pronouncing on them the divine benedictions, do bear analogy with, and supply the room of, the Jewish priesthood.

From which discourse we may, by the way, deduce this corollary: that the title of priest, although it did (as most certainly it doth not) properly and primarily signify a Jewish sacrificer, (or slaughterer of beasts,) doth yet nowise deserve that reproach, which is by some, inconsiderately, (not to say profanely,) on that mistaken ground, commonly cast on it; since the holy Scripture itself, we see, doth here, even in that sense (most obnoxious to exception) ascribe it to the Christian pastors. And so likewise doth the prophet Isaiah; 'And I

will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord:' speaking (as the context plainly declares) of the Gentiles, which should be converted and aggregated to God's church. And the prophet Jeremiah: 'Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.' Which prophecy also evidently concerns the same time and state of things, of which the prophet Malachi thus foretels: 'For, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering.' It were desirable, therefore, that men would better consider, before they entertain such groundless offences, or pass so uncharitable censures on either words, or persons, or things. But I proceed to the

III. Particular, which is the matter of the promise, 'clothing with salvation.' Where we may observe,

First, that the usual metaphor of being clothed doth in the sacred dialect denote a complete endowment with, a plentiful enjoyment of, or an intire application to, that thing, or quality, with which a person is said to be clothed. So is God himself said to be 'clothed with majesty and strength.' And David prays that they might be 'clothed with shame and dishonor, that did magnify themselves against him.' And in Ezekiel, 'the princes of the isles,' being amazed by the ruin of Tyre, are said 'to clothe themselves with trembling.' And that bitter adversary of David (in Psalm cix. 18.) did 'clothe himself with cursing, as with a garment.' And Job avoucheth of himself, 'I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was a robe and a diadem.' And St. Peter advises us to 'put on,' or to 'be clothed with, humility.' Finally, Isaiah introduces our Saviour speaking thus: 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness; as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.' So that, (as by these instances we may discern,) 'to be clothed with salvation' is to be perfectly endowed therewith; to be invested with it as with a garment, which wholly

incloseth and covereth the body, so that no part is left unguarded and unadorned thereby.

Secondly, but now what is that salvation with which the priests of Sion shall be thus clothed? I answer: Salvation, when it is put absolutely, and not conjoined with any particular object, (or term from which,) doth in the Hebrew language properly signify a deliverance from, or remotion of, all sorts of inconvenience: and consequently, an affluence of all good things: and in effect, the same which other languages call felicity and prosperity, or design by terms equivalent to those: the Hebrews having hardly any other word so properly correspondent to those as this word 'salvation.' Whence that title of 'Saviour,' and 'the God of salvation,' so often attributed to Almighty God, imports as much as, the Dispenser of all good gifts; the great Benefactor, Assister, and Protector of men: and to 'save' is promiscuously used for, to relieve the needy, to comfort the sorrowful; to restore the sick to his health, the prisoner to his liberty, the captive to his country; to defend the weak from injury, and the humble from contempt; to deliver the distressed from imminent danger, the innocent from unjust condemnation, the slandered from undeserved reproach: in a word, all the effects of God's goodness and power, the whole work of the divine Providence and beneficence, are hereby expressed.

We will recite one or two of those many places which confirm this notion: Psalm lxxxv. 9. 'Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.' 'His salvation is nigh;' that is, his loving care attends on them, to assist and preserve them; which, in Psalm cxlv. 19. is thus otherwise expressed: 'he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and will save them.' And again, Psalm cxlix. 4. 'The Lord taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation:' that is, he will, by his good providence, dispose them into a convenient and decent condition of life. And again, Psalm cxliv. 10. 'It is he that giveth salvation unto kings;' that is, by whose gracious disposal they prosper, and are preserved in dignity, plenty, and safety.

I will not, by citation of places, labor to confirm so obvious a notion: it may suffice for that purpose, that the supreme accomplishment of all happiness, the enjoyment of perfect bliss in heaven, is, in agreement with this Jewish acception of the word, most commonly styled 'salvation.' But I must add, that, whereas salvation may relate either to the outward estate of a man's body, life, and fortunes, or to the internal dispositions of the mind; to our present condition in this world, or to our future and eternal estate: it doth seem here (I say not, to exclude the latter altogether, yet) more directly and principally to respect the former, viz. that external and temporal welfare, which is conspicuous and visible in this world. My reason is, because the other parts of this prophetical promise do, in their most natural acception, signify that outward prosperity wherewith God would vouchsafe to bless his church: that abundant 'benediction of her store,' that 'satisfying her poor with bread,' that 'joyful exultation of her saints,' that 'clothing her enemies with shame,' being expressions properly denoting a state of external good weal and comfort; and, in consonance to them, require that we thus likewise understand this phrase; the priests being also questionless designed to partake in this glorious felicity of the church. Which is also confirmed by other prophecies of the same tenor and intention: as particularly that in Jer. xxxi. concerning the recollection of Israel, and redemption of the spiritual Sion, it is said, 'I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness,' &c.

Now, although we may adventure safely to interpret the declarations of the divine favor according to the most comprehensive sense of which the words are capable, where they are conceived: (it being the manner of the immensely-good God, to exceed, rather than to be deficient, in the performance of his word; and to surpass the expectations he hath raised in us, than anywise to disappoint them:) yet, however, the least we can imagine here promised to the 'priests of Sion,' will comprehend these three things.

1. A free and safe condition of life: that they be not exposed to continual dangers of ruin; of miserable sufferance, or remediless injury: that the benefits of peace, and law, and

public protection shall particularly appertain to them; so that their adversaries (if any they happen to have) shall not be incited, by hope of reward or impunity, to hurt their persons, rifle their goods, disturb their quiet; but that they shall enjoy good degrees of security, liberty, and tranquillity in this world.

2. A provision of competent subsistence for them: that their condition of life be not wholly necessitous, or very penurious, destitute of convenient accommodations, or depending altogether for them on the arbitrary benevolences of men, which is, at best, but a more plausible kind of beggary; but that they shall be furnished with such reasonable supplies as are requisite to encourage them in the cheerful performance of their duty.

3. A suitable degree of respect, and so high a station among men, as may commend them to general esteem, and vindicate them from contempt: that they be not reputed among the dregs and refuse of the people; that their persons be not base and despicable, their names made the objects of vulgar obloquy, their functions become prostitute to profane irrision; but that some considerable authority, some more than ordinary regard and veneration accrue unto them from the high relations which they bear, and from the sacred business which they manage.

All this at least (according to the most moderate interpretation of the phrase) that abundant salvation doth imply, wherewith God hath promised to 'invest the priests of Sion.'

We may therefore presume, or rather not presume, but confidently rely on, and comfort ourselves in the expectation of God's faithful continuance to fulfil this promise. We may assure ourselves that neither the secret envy of them who repine at those encouragements which God's providence hath conferred on priests, nor the open malice of those that furiously oppugn their welfare, shall ever prevail to overwhelm them with extreme misery, penury, or disgrace; since no endeavor of earth or hell can ever be able to reverse this everlasting decree of heaven, or to defeat that irresistible power which is engaged to its execution. No inferior force can strip them naked of that salvation, wherewith the Supreme Truth hath promised to clothe them.

Which confidence of ours may be improved, by considering the reasons that might induce Almighty God to resolve, and promise thus favorably in behalf of his priests. (For though we cannot penetrate the incomprehensible depths of the divine counsel, nor should ever peremptorily conclude concerning the determinate reasons of his actions; yet, when the wisdom of his proceedings doth clearly approve itself to our understandings, we ought readily to acknowlege it, and humbly to praise him for it.) Now the reasons why divine providence should undertake to preserve the priesthood in safety, to procure for them liberal maintenance, and to raise them above a state of scorn and infamy, may be especially these three.

1. It concerns God's honor.
2. The good of the church requires so.
3. Equity and the reason of the case exacts it.

In prosecuting which heads of discourse, I shall not seem to you, I hope, to transgress the rules of modesty or decency. There be certain seasons, wherein confessedly it is not only excusable, but expedient also, to commend one's self; as when a man is falsely accused, or unjustly afflicted. And with greater reason sometime men are allowed to praise the country where they were born and bred, the family to which they are allied, the society to which they are more especially related. And if at this time I assume the like liberty, the occasion, I hope, will apologise for me. It becomes not me to be an adviser, much less a reprover, in this audience: may I therefore, with your favorable permission, presume to be a commender, or, if you please, a pleader for the welfare of this sacred order, although myself an unworthy and inconsiderable member thereof. I say, therefore,

I. God's honor is concerned in the safe, comfortable, and honorable estate of his priests; and that on account of those manifold relations, whereby they stand allied, appropriated, and devoted to himself.

They are in a peculiar manner his servants. 'The servant of the Lord,' saith St. Paul, 'must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach.' 'The servant of the Lord;' who's that? are not all men God's servants? is not he Lord of all? Yes; but a Christian priest, such as Timothy was, is by way of ex-

cellency so styled. All men owe subjection, obedience, and homage to God: but the priests are (his ὑπηρέται, his λειτουργοὶ) his ministers, his officers, his immediate attendants, his domestics, as it were, and menial servants; that approach his person, that tread the courts of his house, that wear his proper badges, that are employed in his particular business. And is it then for God's honor, to suffer them to be abused, to want convenient sustenance, to live in a mean and disgraceful condition? Would it not redound to the discredit of an earthly prince to permit that the attendants on his person, the officers of his court, the executors of his edicts, should have the least injury offered them, should fare scantly or coarsely, should appear in a sordid garb? Are they not therefore by especial privileges guarded from such inconveniencies? And shall the great King and Lord of all the world be deemed less provident for, less indulgent (not to say less just) unto his servants? servants, I say, and those not of the lowest rank, nor appointed to the vilest drudgeries; but such as are employed in the most honorable charges, and are intrusted with his most especial concernments.

They are his stewards. 'A bishop,' saith St. Paul, 'must be blameless, as the steward of God.' If the church be οἶκος Θεοῦ, God's house, or family, as it is called, and the priests the οἰκονόμοι, the stewards of that house, the comptrollers of that family; it is surely no mean station they obtain therein. The distribution of his bread, (the bread of life, his holy word,) and the dispensation of his most precious goods, (the holy mysteries,) are committed to their care and prudence. 'Who then,' saith our Saviour, 'is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?' Who but the priests, who are therefore styled both προεστῶτες, ἡγούμενοι, κυβερνήσεις, (presidents, guides, rulers,) and ποιμένες, (feeders or pastors) of the church?

Yea, they are οἰκοδόμοι also, the builders of that house, founding it by initial conversion, rearing it by continued instruction, covering and finishing it by sacramental obsignation of divine grace. 'As a wise architect,' saith St. Paul, 'I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it.'

They are *συνεργοὶ Θεοῦ*, 'co-operators with God;' that manage his business, and drive on his designs; the solicitors of his affairs; the masters of his requests; his heralds, that publish his decrees, denounce his judgments, proclaim his pardons and acts of grace unto his subjects; that blazon his titles, and defend his rightful authority in the world: yea, his ministers of state; the ministers (I say, *absit invidia*,) of his most glorious spiritual kingdom; (which is peculiarly denominated the kingdom of God;) the orderly administration of which, its advancement, its preservation, and its enlargement, are especially commended to their diligence and fidelity.

They are, lastly, God's ambassadors,* delegated by him to treat of peace, and solicit a fair correspondence between heaven and earth. 'Now then,' saith St. Paul, 'we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.' 'As though God did beseech you by us:' see, they manage God's concernments, and in a manner represent his person. At least, if the Apostles were more properly God's ambassadors, the present ministers of religion are his agents, and residents here among men, designed to pursue the same negociations commenced by them. Now you know by the law of nations, and common consent of all men, all manner of security, good entertainment, and civil respect hath been ever acknowleged due to ambassadors and public ministers: their employment hath been esteemed honorable, their persons held sacred and inviolable; and whatsoever discourtesy hath been showed unto, or outrage committed on them, hath been interpreted done to him from whom they derive their commission, whose person they represent. And so truly the bad usage of God's priests, if not directly and immediately, does yet really and truly, according to moral estimation, terminate on God himself, and reflect on his honor, and prejudice his religion: a due regard to which cannot be maintained without proportionable respect to the ministers thereof. The basest of the people may serve to be priests to Jeroboam's calves, but not become the ministry of the God of Israel.

* Vide Mal. ii. 7. For the priest's lips should keep knowlege, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

Do we not see the reverence of civil government upheld more by the specious circumstances than by the real necessity thereof: by the magnificent retinue and splendid ornaments of princely dignity, than by the eminent benefits of peace and justice springing thence? Shall not (not only the greatest inward worth, but) the highest nobility, if basely attired, badly attended, slenderly accommodated, pass unregarded, yea, disregarded by us? men being generally either unable to discern, or unwilling to acknowlege excellency divested of sensible lustre. Religion therefore must be well habited, or it will be ill respected: the priests must wear a comely (if not a costly) livery, or God their master's reputation will be impaired in popular fancy.

Consider David's reasoning: 'Lo, I dwell in a house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains;' and compare such discourse therewith as this; and judge candidly whether they have not some parity: Lo, my attendants are clad with the finest purple, God's ministers are covered with the coarsest sackcloth; my people surfeit with dainties, his servants pine away for scarcity; my courtiers are respectfully saluted, his priests scornfully derided; no man dare offend mine, every one may trample on his officers.

And lest we should imagine God himself altogether void of such resentments, or such comparisons impertinent, consider that disdainful expression of his; 'if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now to thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts.' The same testimonies of respect that we show our governors, God, it seems, expects from us in all kinds, and may reasonably much greater.

Nor is it a matter of slight consideration, how plentiful provision, in the policy devised and constituted by God himself, was made for the priests; how God assumes the immediate patronage of them, and appropriates the matter of their sustenance unto himself. 'The priests,' saith the law, 'the Levites, and all the tribe of Levi shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and his inheritance. Therefore they shall have no inheritance

among their brethren: the Lord is their inheritance.' So that then, it seems, no man could withhold any part of the priests' maintenance, without sacrilegious incroachment on God's own right, and robbing him of his due: (which is the greatest security of an estate imaginable.) How likewise (next to the prince) the highest dignity and authority was then conferred on the priests: to them the interpretation of law, to them the decision of doubtful cases did appertain; with severe injunctions to comply with their determinations. See how the business is inculcated. 'If there arise a matter too hard for thee, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment. And thou shalt do according to the sentence which they of that place, which the Lord shall choose, shall show thee: and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee. According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence, which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken to the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, even that man shall die, and thou shalt put away evil from Israel.' Observe with how eminent a power God then thought fit to endow his priests.*

And though we are not in all cases obliged punctually to follow those political prescriptions; yet is the reason of them perpetual, and the example venerable; especially since the custom of all times, and the reason of all the world, doth in a sort conspire to back it.

The first priest we meet with in Scripture is Melchizedek;

* Καὶ γὰρ ἐπόπται πάντων, καὶ δικασταὶ τῶν ἀμφισβητουμένων, καὶ κολασταὶ τῶν κατεγνωσμένων οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐτάχθησαν, saith Josephus. The priests were constituted supervisors of all things, and judges of controversies, and punishers of offences. 2. in Apionem.

a king also; and such a one as the patriarch Abraham, (a prince also himself, and, what is somewhat more, just then a conqueror,) in the midst of his triumphal heights, was not ashamed to acknowlege his superior, to honor him with a tribute of his spoils, and to receive a benediction from him. The next (if I mistake not) is Potipherah, priest of On, whose daughter was not thought by the king of Egypt an unequal match for Joseph, his chief favorite, and the next in dignity to himself in that flourishing kingdom. (Though such an alliance would perhaps be thought derogatory to the worships of our days.) The third is Revel, or Jethro, priest of Midian, the father-in-law likewise of the illustrious Moses; a man as of approved wisdom, so doubtless of considerable dignity too. And the next to him (in order of story) is the venerable Aaron, no meaner a man than the brother of him who was 'king in Jeshurun.' Thus all nations, wise and ignorant, civil and barbarous, were by one common instinct (as it were) of natural reason prompted, by conferring extraordinary privileges of honor and convenience on their priests, to express their reverence of the Deity, and their affection to religion.*

I will not ransack the closets of antiquity, nor with needless ostentation produce the Egyptian Hierophantæ, the Persian Magi, the Gaulish Druids, the caliphs, and muftis of other nations, to show what pre-eminences of respect they enjoyed, what powerful sway they bore in their respective countries; how the most weighty affairs, both of peace and war, were commonly directed by their oracular dictates. It shall suffice to observe that the gallant Romans, (whose devout zeal to religion Polybius himself, no especial friend of theirs, could not forbear to admire and applaud,) I say, that the most wise and valiant Romans did set so high a value on the priestly order, that if their principal magistrates (the prætors and consuls themselves) did casually meet with one of Vesta's priests, they caused immediately those dreadful rods, the ensigns of their authority, to submit; and they themselves respectfully gave place, as if they meant to confess those priests in a manner

* Vid. Aristot. Pol. vii. 9. Οὔτε γὰρ γεωργὸν, οὔτε βάναυσον ἱερέα καταστατέον· ὑπὸ γὰρ τῶν πολιτῶν πρέπει τιμᾶσθαι τοὺς θεούς.

their betters.* Nor did they among them of the most noble extraction, and of the highest dignity in the commonwealth, (even after many glorious exploits achieved by them,) scornfully disdain, but did rather ambitiously affect to be admitted into the college of priests: insomuch that, after the dissolution of the republic, the emperors thought good to assume the pontifical dignity to themselves, supposing the office too honorable, the title too magnificent for a subject. For they wisely, it seems, and honestly adjudged it no debasement of their quality, no diminution to their personal excellency, to be employed in the service of the immortal gods; whom they acknowleged the patrons of their country, the protectors of their safety: nor that they less deserved of the public, who rightly ordered their religious devotions, than they who prudently advised in the senate, or fought valiantly in the field: for that the good success of public undertakings did as much, or more, depend on the favorable disposition of divine Providence, as on the careful endeavor of human industry.

I cannot forbear to allege that so grave and pertinent speech of Cicero, which is the exordium of his oration *ad Pontifices: Cum multa divinitus, pontifices, a majoribus nostris inventa atque instituta sunt; tum nihil præclarius, quam quod vos eosdem et religionibus deorum immortalium, et summæ reip. præesse voluerunt: ut amplissimi et clarissimi cives rempubl. bene gerendo, religiones sapienter interpretando, remp. conservarent.* A wholesome and politic institution he thought it, conducible to the public good and safety, that the civil and sacred authority should be united in the same persons; that it was as well for the interest of the state, as for the credit of religion, that the priests should be men of honor, or (which is all one) honorable men priests.

All which evinces plainly that it is in no wise the result of a generous heart, (for what nation ever produced so many brave spirits as that?) but rather proceeds from an inconsiderate delicacy of humor, (or from a profane haughtiness of mind,) to loathe, as now men do, and despise that employment, which

* Πάντα τὰ πράγματα Ῥωμαίοις εἰς τὸν Θεὸν ἀνήγετο.—Plut. in Marcello. Sen. in Controv.

in its own nature is of all most noble and most beneficial to mankind. For if to be a courtier in a particular country, is of all others the most honorable relation; and to wait on a mortal king is acounted a most worthy function: to be peculiarly God's servant, and in religious addresses immediately to attend on him, must consequently be the most excellent preferment in the world, which is God's kingdom.* And if to supply a man's bodily needs, to restore his liberty, to save his life, be works of generous beneficence; how much more is it so, by good conduct and instruction of men, to adorn their souls with virtue, to free them from the bondage of sin, to rescue them from eternal ruin?

Our magnanimous ancestors, who erected as well trophies of their invincible courage abroad, as monuments of their incomparable piety at home, and equally by both did purchase immortal renown to their ingrateful posterity, (for not to imitate good example is the greatest ingratitude,) they, I say, were otherwise disposed; to whose honest devotion we owe those handsome privileges, and those competent revenues, which the priesthood still enjoys; and which are so maligned by this untoward age, not less degenerate in spirit than corrupt in manners: when all wisdom, and virtue, and religion, are almost in most places grown ridiculous: when the serious use of reason is become (in vulgar opinion) the most impertinent and insignificant thing in the world: when innocence is reputed a mere defect of wit and weakness of judgment; integrity a fond pertinacity of humor; constancy of mind and gravity of demeanor, a kind of sullen morosity or uncouth affectation of singularity; and all strict practice of Christian duty incurs the imputation of some new-found opprobrious name, one or other. No wonder then, when religion itself hath so much decayed in its love and esteem, if the priests, its professed guardians, do partake in its fortune. Nor is it to be feared but that, when the predominant vanities of the age

* Itane plus decet hominis, quam Dei famulum nominari? ac terreni quam cœlestis Regis officialem, altioris ducitur dignitatis? Qui Clero militiam, forum anteponit Ecclesiæ, divinis profecto humana, cœlestibus præferre terrena convincitur.—Bern. Epist. 78.

are somewhat decocted, and men grow weary of their own inconvenient follies; whenever (not a fierce zeal for some whimsical model, or some paradoxical opinion, but) a sober esteem of, and a cordial affection to virtue and genuine piety do begin to revive in the breasts of men; the love and reverence of the clergy will return. For it will be ever true, what was once said, (though dictated only from the reason and experience of a heathen,) *qui bona fide colit Deos, amat et sacerdotes;* 'he that sincerely worships God, will heartily love his priests.' But not to insist longer on this reason.

II. The good of the church requires that the priesthood be well protected, well provided for, and well regarded. That men be converted from iniquity, induced to the sincere practice of virtue, is the chief good of the church, that to which the favor of God is annexed, and on which the salvation of souls doth rely. And this good mainly depends, partly on the due execution of the priestly office, partly on the fit disposition of the people to comply therewith: and to both those effects the comfortable estate of the priesthood is conducible and requisite. The priest must be capable to instruct with advantage, and the people disposed to learn with readiness: he must lead, and they follow cheerfully in the paths of righteousness. Which alacrity how can he be master of, whose mind care and grief, the inseparable companions of a needy estate, do continually distract and discompose? whose spirit is dejected with constant regret and frequent disappointments? Can he be free and expedite in the discharge of his duty, who is perplexed with the difficulties, and incumbered with the varieties of secular business, such as the exigences of a narrow condition do necessarily induce? No: few there be, that, with Epictetus, can philosophate in slavery; or, like Cleanthes, can draw water all the day, and study most of the night.

The priests are bound, (for the propagation of truth and right, and for the reclaiming of men from error and sin, that is, for the most important good of the church,) as the Apostles are often related to have done, παῤῥησιάζεσθαι, 'to speak all out,' (or to use an unconfined liberty of speech;) to exhort to

* Statius, Epist. Dedic. in v. lib. Sylvarum.

the practice of virtue, as our Saviour did, μετ' ἐξουσίας, 'with licence and authority;' to deter from vice, as St. Paul enjoins Titus, μετὰ πάσης ἐπιταγῆς, 'with an all-commanding and imperious strain;' and, (as those faithful brethren did, encouraged by St. Paul's example,) τολμᾷν ἀφόβως λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον, 'to dare undauntedly to utter the word' of truth: they are obliged to deal impartially with all, to flatter no man; to admonish, yea, and (with prudence, seasonably) to reprove the greatest of men: not to respect the persons of the rich, nor to dread the faces of the most terrible among men. And how shall this necessary courage be engendered, be cherished, be preserved, in the breast of him who grovels on the ground, and crouches under the depressing loads of want and disgrace?* What engines are able to raise the spirits of men above the ordinary fountains from which they spring, their fortunes? what props can sustain them at that due pitch, destitute of solid strength, wealth, and respect? With what face shall a pitiful underling encounter the solemn looks of an oppressing grandee? with what hope of success, in his forlorn habit, shall he adventure to check the vicious extravagances of a ruffling gallant? Will he dare to contradict the opinion, or to disallow the practice of that wealthy or this powerful neighbor, by whose alms, it may be, he is relieved, and supported by his favor?

But admit it possible, a man may be both extremely indigent and sufficiently resolute: (that is, strong without food, and fat by digesting the thin air:) with what regard then shall his free and faithful advice be entertained? Shall not his moderate confidence be accounted impudence; his open sincerity of speech be styled unmannerly presumption; his minding others of their duty adjudged a forgetfulness of his own condition, or a disorderly transgressing the due limits thereof: if he be not ashamed of the truth, will not the truth be ashamed of him? Shall he not prejudice more by the meanness of his garb, than

* ——— plurima sunt quæ
Non audent homines pertusa dicere læna.—Juven. Sat. v.

Αἰδώς τοι πρὸς ἀνολβίῃ, θάρσος δὲ πρὸς ὄλβῳ.—Hes. i. 317.

Πρὸς ἅπαντα δειλὸς ὁ πένης ἐστὶ πράγματα,
Καὶ πάντας αὐτοῦ καταφρονεῖν ὑπολαμβάνει.—Menand.

further by the force of his reason, that good cause which he maintains? Will men respect his words, whose person they despise? Will they be willingly counselled or patiently reproved by him, whom they esteem, yea, whom they plainly see, so much their inferior? No: the same words which proceed from the mouths of men in eminent dignity are not the same when they are uttered by those of base degree.* Weak and ineffectual are the most eloquent harangues of beggarly orators; obscure, like themselves, and unobserved, the most notable dictates of poor mercenary pedants. The authority of the speaker doth usually more incline, than the weight of the matter. It was the observation of the wise son of Sirach: 'When a rich man slips, he hath many helpers; he speaketh things not to be spoken, and yet men justify him: the poor man miscarried, and they farther rebuked him; he spake discreetly, and yet could have no place. When a rich man speaketh, every man holdeth his tongue; and his words they extol to the clouds: but if the poor man speak, they say, Who is this? and if he stumble, they will help to overthrow him.' And Solomon himself notes the same: 'The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.' Not only those that swell with pride and swim in plenty, but even the meanest of the people, will be apt to contemn his instructions, whom they perceive in few or no circumstances of life to excel them. If the preacher's condition be not, as well as his pulpit, somewhat elevated above the lowest station, few will hear him, fewer mind his words, very few obey him. Job's case deserves well to be considered. While he flourished in wealth and reputation, all men attended to his counsel, and admired his discourse. 'The princes,' saith he, 'refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth: the nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again, and my speech dropped on them.' So officiously atten-

* Τὸ δ' ἀξίωμα, κἂν κακῶς λέγῃ, τὸ σὸν
Πείσει· Λόγος γὰρ ἐκ τ' ἀδοξούντων ἰὼν,
Κἀκ τῶν δοκούντων αὐτὸς, οὐ ταυτὸν σθένει.—Eurip. in Hecuba.

tive were all men to Job in his prosperity. But when the scale was turned, and he became depressed in estate, no man minded either him or his discourse, except it were to despise and scorn both. 'But now,' saith he, 'they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock. I am their song, yea, I am their by-word. They abhor me, they fly far from me, and spare not to spit in my face; because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me.'* If Job, a person who so equally and moderately, yea, so humbly, and courteously, and bountifully used his prosperity, as we find he did, was notwithstanding in his adversity so generally slighted and abhorred; what shall their lot be who never enjoyed those advantages? what regard shall their wholesome advice find? what efficacy their most pathetical exhortations obtain? what passion their faint breath raise in men's benumbed hearts? No more, certainly, than their mean condition shall procure among men either of friendship or esteem.

We see therefore how Almighty God, that he might conciliate credit unto, and infuse a persuasive energy into the words of his prophets and apostles, was pleased to dignify them with extraordinary gifts of foretelling future events and doing miraculous works: their doctrine, it seems, (though of itself most reasonable and plausible,) being not sufficient to convince the hearers, without some remarkable excellency in the teachers, challenging the people's awful regard, and exciting their attention. Otherwise how pitifully scant a draught those poor fishers of men had caught by the common allurements only of innocent life and rational discourse, I leave you to imagine. And where such extraordinary commendations are wanting, is it not reasonable that the need of them should be supplied by ordinary and probable expedients?

I might farther add, how a necessitous and despicable estate doth commonly not only disturb the minds and deject the spirits of men, but distempereth also their souls, and vitiateth their manners; rendering them not only sad and anxious,

* Prov. xiv. 20. The poor is hated even of his own neighbor: but the rich hath many friends.

slavish and timorous, but greedy also and covetous, peevish and mutinous, rude and ignorant; engages them in sordid company, and tempts them to unworthy courses. From which one cause how scandalous effects, and how prejudicial to the church's both honor and safety, have proceeded, I need not for to say, since woful experience too loudly proclaims it.

I might add, moreover, that the priests do confer to the good of the state; which is secured and advanced by the sincere instruction of men in duties of obedience, justice, and fidelity; and by maintenance of good conscience among men. So that, if things be rightly considered, it will be hard to find a better commonwealth's man than a good minister.

Seeing therefore the good of the church, on various accounts, is so much concerned in the priests' encouragement, welfare, and respect, it is very fitting they should have them. Which consideration I conclude with that serious admonition of the Apostle to the Hebrews, wherein the substance of what hath been spoken on this point is contained: 'Obey your rulers, (or guides,) and submit to them; for they watch for your souls, as they that are to give an account; that they may do it with joy, and not with complaint; for this is unprofitable for you.' Ἀλυσιτελὲς γὰρ τοῦτο· that is, 'for this pays no taxes, quits no scores; turns to no account, is nowise advantageous for you;' but rather (for there is a *μείωσις* in those words) is hurtful and detrimental to you. But farther,

III. Common equity, and the reason of the case exacts, that safety, competent subsistence, and fitting respect be allowed to the priests. If you consider their personal qualities, who, I pray, do [commonly] better deserve those advantages than they? Those qualities, I say, which result from a liberal, a sober, a modest education in the schools of wisdom, and under the influences of good discipline. If birth (that is, at best, an imaginary relation to the gallantry of an ancestor) entitle men to honor; if the cheap favors of fortune be so highly prized and admired; if riches (that is, the happy results of industry in trivial matters) do easily purchase respect: what may not they pretend to, whose constant (and not always unsuccessful) endeavor it hath been to deserve well, to cultivate their minds, and regulate their manners?

True worth, indeed, is not confined to any particular order of men; yet I should wrong none, by saying it is nowhere more plentifully to be found than in this. What is it that doth advance men's nature, that adorns their minds, that commends their persons to especial regard? Is it knowlege? 'The priests' lips preserve it:' their discourse doth diffuse it. Is it virtue? Whence have more or greater examples thereof proceeded than from them? Is it piety? It is their proper business; it hath been always, in some measure, their care to promote it: that ignorance and barbarity, dissoluteness and irreligion, have not long since, like a deluge, overspread the face of the world, none, I suppose, will be so unjust as to deny, in greatest part, due to their vigilant endeavors. Even those improvements of wit and eloquence, which are employed to their disgrace and disadvantage, must be acknowleged originally derived from them.

Faults they have had, and will always have; for they are men, and subject to the common imperfections of mortal nature: but that, perhaps, less and fewer than any other distinct sort of men; that as it is their duty, so it hath been their practice, to excel in virtue: and that they have commonly, in effect, made good St. Ambrose's words, *Debet præponderare vita sacerdotis, sicut præponderat gratia;* were not difficult to demonstrate, if seemly to make comparisons, or to insist on so invidious a subject. Nor, were they greater than ever really they have been, or than ever malice could misrepresent them, should it be therefore equal, that the miscarriages of some should derogate from the reputation or prejudice the welfare of the whole order.

But to waive this plea; consider their employment. Is there any office more laborious, more vexatious than theirs; accompanied with more wearisome toil, more solicitous care, more tedious attendance? They are deservedly called 'watchmen,' being constrained to stand always on the guard, to be always wakeful, attentive, and ready to warn the people of approaching dangers: and 'shepherds' likewise, being forced to indure the various hardships of that uneasy life, the inconveniences of all weathers, the nipping frosts and sweltry heats, and all diversities of irksome travail; they must feed, they must guide, they must defend; they must seek the lost, and reduce the straying sheep. What assiduity of study, what earnest contention of

soul are they obliged to use, in the continual instruction, exhortation, and reprehension of the people; in rectifying their judgments, satisfying their scruples, removing their prejudices, bearing their infirmities, and sympathising with their afflictions? It is they that are engaged, with all their might, to withstand the prevailing encroachments of iniquity, to stop the progress of pernicious errors, to detect the false pretences of impostors, to confute the fallacies of sophisters, to repel the assaults of all adversaries to the truth; yea, if need be, to expose not only their dearest contents of life, but even their lives themselves, in the defence thereof.

Eusebius reports thus of Maximinus: Τοὺς τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἄρχοντας μόνους, ὡς αἰτίους τῆς κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον διδασκαλίας, ἀναιρεῖσθαι προστάττει. 'He commanded that only the governors of the church (that is, the bishops) should be slaughtered, as the authors of the growth and prevalence of evangelical doctrine.' Neither was it a singular practice of that bloody tyrant; but, as a thing of course, it constantly follows that, whereever righteousness and truth are violently impugned, the priests are sure to taste deepest of that bitter cup; that their goods be, in the first place, sequestered and spoiled, their reputation stained, their persons misused, their lives sacrificed to the persecutor's outrageous malice.

Is it not reasonable then, and equal, that they who, for the service of God and benefit of the church, undergo such difficulties, and are objected to so great hazards, should be sustained, should be refreshed by proportionable encouragements? Is it not barbarous usage to expect so hard duties from them, to impose such heavy burdens on them, and yet to grudge any suitable comforts, any satisfactory rewards to them? Good king Hezekiah surely was not so minded, of whom it is said, 'He commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord:' that is, they might be heartened to study, to teach, to perform the duties required of them by the divine law. And St. Paul thus rationally expostulates in the priests' behalf: 'who ever goeth to war at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit

thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?' 'Is it a great thing?' do you think much of it? If you do, you are unreasonable, you are unjust, you are ingrateful. And otherwhere he thus very emphatically admonishes: 'we beseech you, brethren, to mind them which labor among you, and preside over you in the Lord, and that admonish you; and to esteem them more than exceedingly (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ) in love, for their work (or, for their office) sake:' (so ἔργον frequently signifies in such cases.) And again; 'Let the elders (or priests, οἱ πρεσβύτεροι,) which rule well, be counted worthy of double honor,' (or of double recompense: so τιμὴ also imports.) Priests, as so, for their office sake, have honor and reward due to them; which, according to the good management of that office, are proportionably to be augmented and multiplied.

But farther yet, abstracting from both their personal worth and the merit of their service, consider their condition in this world, and see whether it doth not in equity challenge some reasonable provision to be made for them. Are they not, by the nature of their profession, secluded from all ordinary means of temporal advancement? Be not those usual inlets of wealth, the court, the camp, and the exchange, shut on them, yea, barred against them, by those insuperable obstacles of law and custom? Can they grow rich by trade, or famous by feats of arms? May they plead for others? It is well if they be allowed to do it for themselves before equal judges. Yet are they not men, endued with human passions and resentments? Are they not citizens, partaking in the common interests of the weal public? Are they not sensible of the inconveniences, and capable of enjoying the benefits of this life? Are they not equally obliged, and would they not be glad as well as others to be in a capacity to requite courtesies, to help relations, to gratify friends, to relieve the poor, to express respectively their humanity and their gratitude? Skill they not to use the goods of fortune (or rather the gifts of Providence) with as much discretion, as much sobriety, as much honor as others? Compare things righteously, and let reason judge; let experience be exa-

mined; let those eternal monuments of their piety, their charity, their hospitality, declare and testify. Shall, lastly, the fruits of painful study, the improvement of hopeful parts, the flower of vigorous age and strength spent in the public service, tend only hither, to put a man into a state of struggling with extreme contempt and penury? If this be not, what, I pray you, is monstrous iniquity?

Since therefore it appears (on so many several scores) reasonable that Almighty God should undertake the protection, and assert the honor of his priests, we may not only praise the goodness, but approve also the wisdom of this promise, and by the contemplation thereof strengthen our faith in reliance thereon. To which purpose one consideration more may very much conduce, and withal may provoke our gratitude to celebrate his truth and faithfulness in making good, as well as his goodness and wisdom in making, this promise; viz. the considering how continually hitherto God hath been pleased effectually to 'clothe his priests with salvation,' to provide abundantly for their safety, their accommodation, their respect in this world, and to deliver them from the opposite inconveniences.

If we reflect our thoughts on the first ages of Christianity, (not more dismal for suffering than glorious for piety,) it is admirable to see how sincerely and passionately the Christian people did then love their priests and pastors; how liberally, out of their slender stock and the shipwrecks of their spoiled fortunes, they contributed to their maintenance; what exceeding veneration they bore them; with what incredible alacrity they submitted to the most severe disciplines enjoined by them; how willingly they followed them, though leading into the jaws of death and cruel torture: so that, although it was then necessary for the Christian priests to undergo the greatest hardships, according to the design of Christian religion, (which was to be propagated, not by terror of power, nor by politic artifice, but by the invincible faith, resolution, and patience, of the professors and teachers thereof;) yet never more may they have seemed to thrive and prosper, than in that juncture of time, when they enjoyed the universal good-will and applause of good people, when they unconstrainedly embraced affliction

for righteousness sake, and acquired thereby the certain fruition of a more excellent salvation.

But in the succeeding times, when Christianity, breaking out of the clouds of persecution, began to shine over all with brightest lustre; of the glorious and happy fruits of that illustrious triumph none did partake more fully than they who had sustained the hardest brunts of the foregoing conflict, and had been the principal causes of the success. Then the joyful acclamations of the faithful people resounded in the praise of their victorious champions: then did the emperors themselves, with arms outstretched and hearts enlarged, with affection embrace the authors of their happy conversion: then all laws prejudicial to their welfare were rescinded, and new ones were substituted, abundantly providing for their security, honest livelihood, and due reverence; which in progress of time, not in the Roman empire only, but in all other nations, (that afterwards did entertain Christianity,) were nowise impaired, but were rather ampliated and fortified by the pious favor of princes: the barbarous Goths, and Vandals, and Lombards, being no sooner endued with any degree of civility, or any sense of religion, than possessed with a hearty reverence of their bishops and priests.

And ever since, (which is not to be imputed, as some rashly, if not impiously aver, to the prevalence of antichristian iniquity, but rather to the providence of divine benignity; ever since, I say,) till the late commotions and alterations in Christendom, they have been the guardians of others' safety, not themselves deprived of protection; have abounded with wealth, rather than wanted sustenance; have been the objects of envy, more than of contempt. Princes have loved and cherished them, have relied on their advice, and intrusted them with their highest concernments. Nobles have not been ashamed to yield them place. The sacerdotal robe hath been often dyed with purple; and the sons of mighty monarchs have not thought themselves degraded by entering into their order. And if in some particular places (before or since those changes) their condition hath not been so high and plentiful, yet hath it been (almost ever) tolerable; the countenance of authority and the

respect of the people being in good degree vouchsafed them. Even in those churches, which till this day groan under the oppression of infidel princes, the priests (by the free permission of those princes) retain their jurisdiction in a manner as great as ever; and withal enjoy a maintenance not altogether inconsiderable.

So favorable hitherto hath God been unto his priests, so faithful to his promise: which doth oblige us to thank him; which may encourage us to hope in him; which may arm us with confidence against the present ill-will of those that wish, and against the practices of those that design our ruin.

It is true, this promise is not affixed to all parts of time, to all particularities of place, to all determinate circumstances of things. The priests may, now and then, here and there, in this or that, suffer highly; they may be ejected, be plundered, be degraded, as experience hath showed us. But they may be also soon restored, repossessed, readvanced, and (I had almost said) revenged too, as the like experience doth assure us. It is not impossible, I confess, we may relapse into the same, or into a more calamitous estate; the obstinate disaffections of men threaten it, and our own miscarriages more dangerously: yet the most offensive of these (which many honest men dislike, and most men exclaim against) have been in as bitter terms complained of in almost the first ages. *Inhiant possessionibus, prædia excolunt, auro incubant, quæstui per omnia student*, said a devout writer* of ecclesiastical history about 1300 years ago. And so much no man (without extreme uncharitableness and falsehood) can in so general terms impute to the present clergy: notwithstanding which, God did continue to vouchsafe his protection to them. They were sometimes, (by the inundations of barbarous people,) and we may again, (by national concussions,) be severely chastised for our faults: yet were not they, nor shall we be (at least every where and for ever) utterly rejected. God may 'visit our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquity with stripes: nevertheless his lovingkindness will he not utterly take from us, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. His covenant he will not break, nor alter the

* Sulp. Sev. lib. i. c. 43.

thing that is gone out of his lips.' God may for a time hide his face from us; but he will not for ever turn his back on us: the honor of the priesthood may for a while be overclouded in some part of the world; but shall never totally be eclipsed, nor swallowed up in a perpetual night. While God continues his residence in Sion, and defends his church against 'the gates of Hell' and 'powers of darkness;' while religion retains any sway in the hearts of men, and truth possesses any room on earth; the priests shall not be left destitute and naked, but everlastingly 'be clothed with salvation.' Which that it may (to the glory of God and good of his church) more surely come to pass, let us convert this promise into a prayer, and say with Solomon, 'Now therefore arise, O Lord God, thou and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.' Amen.

SUMMARY OF SERMON XIII.

JAMES, CHAP. III.—VERSE 2.

THE words of the text declare that man to be perfect who offends not in speech; and they consequently imply that we should avoid offending therein. The assertion is to be first briefly explained; then its truth declared; and afterwards the duty or obligation of it pressed. To *offend* originally signifies to *impinge*, or to stumble dangerously on somewhat lying across our way: by *not offending in word* then, we may understand such a restraint and careful guidance of our tongue, that it does not transgress the rules of divine law, nor thwart the proper purposes for which it was framed.

By *a perfect man* is meant a person accomplished and complete in goodness, who, as to the continual tenor of his life, is free from all notorious defects and heinous faults; *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless:* such were Noah, Abraham, and Job. So that in effect the words import this; that a constant government of our speech according to duty and reason, is a special argument of a sincere and solid goodness. The truth of which aphorism may from several considerations appear.

1. A good government of the speech is a strong evidence of a good mind, pure from vicious desires, disorderly passions, and dishonest intentions. For speech is a child of thought, which the mind always travails and teems with, and which, after its birth, is wont in features to resemble its parent: confirmation of this truth from Scripture, &c.

2. From hence, that the use of speech is itself a great in-

gredient in our practice, and hath a very general influence on whatever we do, it may be inferred that whoever governeth it well, cannot also but well order his life: observations on the province of speech, so large as it is, and so universally concerned, either immediately as the matter, or by consequence as the source of our actions.

3. To govern the tongue well is a matter of exceeding difficulty, requiring not only hearty goodness, but great judgment and art, together with much vigilance and circumspection; whence the doing it argues a high pitch of virtue: especially if we consider that,

4. Irregular speech hath commonly more advantages for it, and fewer checks on it, than other bad practices have: that is, a man is apt to speak ill with less dissatisfaction and regret from within; he may do it with less control and hazard from without, than he can act ill: this enlarged on.

5. Whereas most of the enormities, mischiefs, and troubles, whereby the souls of men are defiled and their lives disquieted, are the fruits of ill-governed speech, he that by well governing it, preserves himself from guilt and inconvenience, must necessarily be, not only a wise and happy, but a good and worthy person.

6. His tongue also so ruled, cannot but produce very good fruits of honor to God, of benefit to his neighbor, and of comfort to himself: this declared in many passages of the Proverbs.

7. The observation how unusual this practice is, in any good degree, may strongly assure us of its excellency: for the rarer, especially in morals, any good thing is, the more noble and worthy it is; that rarity arguing somewhat of peculiar difficulty in the attainment of it: the topic enlarged on. This being said for confirmation of the point asserted, it is requisite that we should understand and consider the nature of those several offences to which speech is liable, together with the

special depravity and inconvenience of each: these are various in kind, according to the difference of the objects to which they refer. Whence, 1. some are committed against God, and confront piety; 2. others against our neighbor, and violate justice, charity, &c.; 3. others against ourselves, infringing sobriety, discretion, or modesty; 4. some are of a more general nature, crossing all the heads of duty. As time would not permit a description of all these kinds, the present discourse is confined to some of the first sort, that is, offences against piety, with some reasons why we should eschew them.

I. Speaking blasphemously against God, or reproachfully concerning religion, with intent to subvert men's faith in God, or to impair their reverence of him. This of all impieties is most prodigiously gigantic; enmity towards God, and war waged against heaven. Of all *weapons formed against God*, the tongue doth most notoriously impugn him; for we cannot reach heaven with our hands, or immediately assault God by our acts: other ill practice obliquely, or by consequence, dishonoreth him, and defameth goodness; but profane discourse is directly levelled at them, and doth immediately touch them, as its formal objects. The extreme folly and wickedness of this practice enlarged on, with the great injury it does to society.

II. Another like offence against piety is, to speak loosely and wantonly about holy things, or to make such the matter of sport and mockery: but this topic will be discussed in a subsequent discourse.

III. Another grand offence is, rash and vain swearing in common discourse, an offence which is by far too prevalent in the world, passing about in a specious garb, as a mark of fine breeding and of graceful quality. To repress this vile practice some considerations are offered.

1. Swearing is most expressly and strictly prohibited to us: Mat. v. 34. Jam. v. 12. What more palpable affront there-

fore can be offered to our religion, and to all that is sacred among us?

2. According to the very nature and reason of things, it is evidently intolerable profaneness thus unadvisedly to make addresses and appeals to God: should we thus presume to encroach on the majesty and assail the ears of a human prince?

3. Swearing is by our holy oracles worthily represented to us as an especial piece of worship and devotion towards God: wherefore it is a horrible mockery and profanation of so sacred an ordinance, when we use it without any consideration or respect on every light occasion.

4. The doing so is also very prejudicial to human society; since the decision of right, the security of government, and the preservation of peace, depend so much on an awful regard to oaths, and therefore on their being only used in due manner and season.

5. This way of swearing is also a very uncivil and unmannerly practice; a gross rudeness towards the main body of men, who justly reverence the name of God, and loathe such abuse of it.

6. This practice also derogates from the credit of him that uses it, rendering the truth of whatever he says in reason and justice suspected.

7. It can be no wrong to distrust him, since he implies himself not to be, even in his own opinion, a credible person; since he judges not his own bare affirmation to deserve belief.

8. To excuse this, the swearer must be forced to confess another ugly fault in speaking; that is, impertinence, or the using of waste and insignificant words: this enlarged on.

9. This offence is particularly inexcusable, in that it scarcely has any temptation to it, or brings with it any advantage. It gratifies no sense, yields no profit, procures no honor.

Finally, as to this whole point, about not offending in our

speech against piety, we should consider that, as we ourselves, with all our members and powers, were chiefly designed and framed to serve and glorify our Maker, so especially our tongue was given us, to declare our admiration and reverence of him, to express our love and gratitude to him, to celebrate his praise, and promote his honor: hence it becomes in effect what the psalmist so often terms it, our *glory*, and the best member we have. Therefore, to apply it to any impious discourse, and the dishonor of God, is a most unnatural abuse of it, and vile ingratitude.

SERMON XIII.

NOT TO OFFEND IN WORD AN EVIDENCE OF A HIGH PITCH OF VIRTUE.

JAMES, CHAP. III.—VERSE 2.

If any man offend not in word, he is a perfect man.

This sentence stands in the head of a discourse concerning the tongue, (that doubtful engine of good and evil,) wherein how excellent benefits, and how grievous mischiefs, it, as rightly or perversely wielded, is apt to produce, how it is both a sweet instrument of all goodness, and a sharp weapon of all iniquity, is positively laid down, and by fit comparisons illustrated. But secluding all relation to the context, the words may well be considered singly by themselves; and as such they instruct us, asserting a certain truth; they direct us, implying a good duty. They assert that man to be perfect, who offends not in speech; and they consequently imply that we should strive to avoid offending therein; for to 'be perfect,' and to 'go on to perfection,' are precepts, the observance whereof is incumbent on us. We shall first briefly explain the assertion, and then declare its truth; afterwards we shall press somewhat couched in the duty.

To offend originally signifies to impinge, that is, to stumble, or hit dangerously on somewhat lying cross our way, so as thereby to be cast down, or at least to be disordered in our posture, and stopt in our progress: whence it is well transferred to denote our being through any incident temptation brought into sin, whereby a man is thrown down, or bowed from his

upright state, and interrupted from prosecuting a steady course of piety and virtue. By an usual and apposite manner of speaking, our tenor of life is called 'a way,' our conversation 'walking,' our actions 'steps,' our observing good laws 'uprightness,' our transgression of them 'tripping, faultering, falling.'

By 'not offending in word,' we may easily then conceive to be understood such a constant restraint, and such a careful guidance of our tongue, that it doth not transgress the rules prescribed unto it by divine law, or by good reason; that it thwarteth not the natural ends and proper uses for which it was framed, to which it is fitted; such as chiefly are promoting God's glory, our neighbor's benefit, and our own true welfare.

By 'a perfect man' is meant a person accomplished and complete in goodness, one of singular worth and integrity, a brave and excellent man, who, as to the continual tenor of his life, is free from all notorious defects, and heinous faults; like David, 'fulfilling all God's will,' and 'having respect to all God's commandments:' like Zachary and Elizabeth, 'walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.' Thus was Noah, thus was Abraham, thus was Job perfect. This is the notion of perfection in holy Scripture: not an absolute exemption from all blemish of soul, or blame in life; for such a perfection is inconsistent with the nature and state of man here, where none with modesty or with truth can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin;' where every man must confess with Job, 'If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse.' For 'there is not,' as the preacher assures, 'a just man on earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not;' and 'in many things we offend all,' is our Apostle's assertion, immediately preceding my text; which words may serve to expound these. 'In many things,' saith he, 'we offend all;' that is, there is no man absolutely perfect; but 'if any man offend not in word,' (that is, if a man constantly govern his tongue well,) 'that man is perfect;' perfect in such a kind and degree as human frailty doth admit; he is eminently good; he may be reasonably presumed upright and blameless in all the course of his practice; 'able,' as it follows, 'to

bridle the whole body,' that is, qualified to order all his actions justly and wisely. So that in effect the words import this; that a constant governance of our speech according to duty and reason is a high instance and a special argument of a throughly sincere and solid goodness.

The truth of which aphorism may from several considerations appear.

1. A good governance of speech is a strong evidence of a good mind; of a mind pure from vicious desires, calm from disorderly passions, void of dishonest intentions. For since speech is a child of thought, which the mind always travaileth and teemeth with, and which after its birth is wont in features to resemble its parents; since every man naturally is ambitious to propagate his conceits, and without a painful force cannot smother his resentments; since especially bad affections, like stum or poison, are impetuous and turgid, so agitating all the spirits, and so swelling the heart, that it cannot easily compose or contain them; since a distempered constitution of mind, as of body, is wont to weaken the retentive faculty, and to force an evacuation of bad humors; since he that wanteth the principal wisdom of well ordering his thoughts, and mastering his passions, can hardly be conceived so prudent, as long to refrain, or to regulate their dependence, speech; considering these things, I say, it is scarce possible that he which commonly thinks ill, should constantly either be well silent, or speak well. To conceal fire, to check lightning, to confine a whirlwind, may perhaps be no less feasible, than to keep within due compass the exorbitant motions of a soul, wherein reason hath lost its command, so that *qua data porta*, where the next passage occurs, they should not rush forth, and vent themselves. A vain mind naturally will bubble forth or fly out in frothy expressions; wrath burning in the breast will flame out, or at least smoke through the mouth; rancorous imposthumes of spite and malice will at length discharge purulent matter; lust boiling within will soon foam out in lewd discourse. If the fountain itself is polluted, or infected, how can the streams be clear or wholesome? 'How can ye, being evil, speak good things?' saith our Lord; 'for from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' 'A good man,' addeth he, 'out of the

good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things:' ἐκβάλλει πονηρὰ, 'he casteth forth ill things,' as a fountain doth its waters by a natural and necessary ebullition. It is true, that in some particular cases, or at some times, a foul heart may be disguised by fair words, or covered by demure reservedness: shame, or fear, or crafty design, may often repress the declaration of ill thoughts and purposes. But such fits of dissimulation cannot hold; men cannot abide quiet under so violent constraints; the intestine jars, or unkindly truces, between heart and tongue (those natural friends) cannot be perpetual, or very durable: no man can hold his breath long, or live without evaporating through his mouth those steams of passion which arise from flesh and blood. 'My heart was hot within me, while I was musing, the fire burned; then spake I with my tongue,' saith David, expressing the difficulty of obstructing the eruption of our affections into language. Hence it is that speech is commonly judged the truest character of the mind, and the surest test of inward worth; as that which discloseth the 'hidden man of the heart,' which unlocketh the closets of the breast, which draws the soul out of her dark recesses into open light and view, which rendereth our thoughts visible, and our intentions palpable. Hence *loquere, ut te videam,* Speak, that I may see you, or know what kind of man you are, is a saying which all men, at first meeting, do in their hearts direct one to another: neither commonly doth any man require more to ground a judgment on concerning the worth or ability of another, than opportunity of hearing him to discourse for a competent time: yea, often before a man hath spoken ten words, his mind is caught, and a formal sentence is passed on it. Such a strict affinity and connexion do all men suppose between thoughts and words.

2. From hence, that the use of speech is itself a great ingredient into our practice, and hath a very general influence on whatever we do, may be inferred, that whoever governeth it well, cannot also but well order his whole life. The extent of speech must needs be vast, since it is nearly commensurate to thought itself, which it ever closely traceth, widely ranging through all the immense variety of objects; so that men almost

as often speak incogitantly, as they think silently. Speech is indeed the rudder that steereth human affairs, the spring that setteth the wheels of action on going; the hands work, the feet walk, all the members and all the senses act by its direction and impulse; yea, most thoughts are begotten, and most affections stirred up thereby: it is itself most of our employment, and what we do beside it, is however guided and moved by it. It is the profession and trade of many, it is the practice of all men, to be, in a manner continually talking. The chief and most considerable sort of men manage all their concernments merely by words; by them princes rule their subjects, generals command their armies, senators deliberate and debate about the great matters of state: by them advocates plead causes, and judges decide them; divines perform their offices, and minister their instructions; merchants strike up their bargains, and drive on all their traffic. Whatever almost great or small is done in the court or in the hall, in the church or at the exchange, in the school or in the shop, it is the tongue alone that doeth it: it is the force of this little machine, that turneth all the human world about. It is indeed the use of this strange organ which rendereth human life, beyond the simple life of other creatures, so exceedingly various and compounded; which creates such a multiplicity of business, and which transacts it; while by it we communicate our secret conceptions, transfusing them into others; while therewith we instruct and advise one another; while we consult about what is to be done, contest about right, dispute about truth; while the whole business of conversation, of commerce, of government, and administration of justice, of learning, and of religion, is managed thereby; yea, while it stoppeth the gaps of time, and filleth up the wide intervals of business, our recreations and divertisements (the which do constitute a great portion of our life) mainly consisting therein, so that, in comparison thereof, the execution of what we determine and all other action do take up small room: and even all that usually dependeth on foregoing speech, which persuadeth, or counselleth, or commandeth it. Whence the province of speech being so very large, it being so universally concerned, either immediately as the matter, or by consequence as the source of our actions,

he that constantly governeth it well may justly be esteemed to live very excellently.

3. To govern the tongue well is a matter of exceeding difficulty, requiring not only hearty goodness, but great judgment and art, together with much vigilance and circumspection; whence the doing it argues a high pitch of virtue. For since the tongue is a very loose and versatile engine, which the least breath of thought doth stir, and set on going any way, it cannot but need much attention to keep it either in a steady rest, or in a right motion. Since numberless swarms of things roving in the fancy do thence incessantly obtrude themselves on the tongue, very much application of mind and great judgment are requisite to select out of them those few which are good and fit, rejecting all that is bad, and improper to be spoken. Since continually temptations occur provoking or alluring to miscarriage in this kind, (for beside internal propensions and commotions of soul, every object we behold, every company we are engaged in, every accident befalling us, doth suggest somewhat inviting thereto; the condition of our neighbor moving us, if high, to flatter, if low, to insult; our own fortune prompting, if prosperous, to boast, if cross, to murmur; any action drawing from us, if it pleaseth us, fond admiration, if it disliketh, harsh censure: since, I say, we are thus at every turn obnoxious to speak amiss,) it must be matter of huge skill and caution, of mighty industry and resolution, to decline it. We for that purpose need to imitate that earnest and watchful care of the holy psalmist, which he thus expresseth; 'I have,' saith he, 'purposed that my mouth shall not offend:' and, 'I said,' saith he again, 'I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.' And thus to maintain a constant guard over his heart and ways, thus in consequence thereof to curb and rule his speech well, must assuredly be the mark of a very good person. Especially considering that,

4. Irregular speech hath commonly divers more advantages for it, and fewer checks on it, than other bad practice hath. A man is apt, I mean, to speak ill with less dissatisfaction and regret from within; he may do it with less control and less hazard from without, than he can act ill. Bad actions are

gross and bulky, taking up much time, and having much force spent on them, whence men easily observe and consider them in themselves and others: but ill words are subtile and transient, soon born, and as soon deceased; whence men rashly utter them without much heed before them, or much reflexion after them. Bad actions have also usually visible effects immediately consequent on them: but words operate insensibly and at distance: so that men hardly discern what will follow them, or what they have effected. There are also frequent occasions of speaking ill on presumption of secrecy, and thence of indisturbance and impunity; yea, doing so is often entertained with complacence, and encouraged with applause: the vilest abuses of speech (even blasphemy, treason, and slander themselves) may be safely whispered into ears, which will receive them with pleasure and commendation. Bad language also in most cases is neither strictly prohibited, nor severely chastised by human laws, as bad action is. Whence ordinarily the guilt of this misbehavior seems little or none; and persons much practising it, both in their own conceit, and in the opinion of others, do often pass for innocent. Men indeed here will hardly discern any rule, or acknowlege any obligation: the tongue they deem is free, and any words may be dispensed with: it is sufficient if they abstain from doing gross wrong or mischief, they have a right and liberty to say any thing. 'Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?' so are men commonly prone to say, with those in the Psalm. Hence whosoever, notwithstanding such encouragements to offend herein, and so few restraints from it, doth yet carefully forbear it, governing his tongue according to rules of duty and reason, may justly be reputed a very good man. Farthermore,

5. Whereas most of the enormities, the mischiefs, and the troubles, whereby the souls of men are defiled, their minds discomposed, and their lives disquieted, are the fruits of ill-governed speech; it being that chiefly which perverteth justice, which soweth dissensions, which raiseth all bad passions and animosities, which embroileth the world in seditions and factions, by which men wrong and abuse, deceive and seduce, defame and disgrace one another, whereby consequently innumerable vexations and disturbances are created among men; he

that by well governing his speech preserveth himself from the guilt, disengageth his mind and life from the inconveniences of all such evils, (from the discreet and honest management thereof enjoying both innocence and peace,) must necessarily be as a very wise and happy, so a very good and worthy person.

6. His tongue also so ruled cannot but produce very good fruits of honor to God, of benefit to his neighbor, of comfort to himself: it will be sweet and pleasant, it will be wholesome and useful; endearing conversation, cementing peaceful society, breeding and nourishing love, instructing and edifying, or cheering and comforting the hearers. His 'tongue is health;' his 'mouth is a well and tree of life;' his 'lips disperse knowlege;' he 'shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth; every man shall kiss his lips.' Such, as the wise man telleth us, are the effects of innocent, sober, and well-ordered discourse; the which do much commend their author, and declare the excellent virtue of that tree from which such fruits do grow.

7. Lastly, the observation how unusual this practice is, in any good degree, may strongly assure the excellency thereof. For the rarer, especially in morals, any good thing is, the more noble and worthy it is; that rarity arguing somewhat of peculiar difficulty in the attainment or the achievement thereof. Nothing is more obvious to common experience, than that persons, who in the rest of their demeanor and dealings appear blameless, yea, who in regard to other points of duty would seem nice and precise, are extremely peccant in this kind. We may see divers, otherwise much restraining and much denying themselves, who yet indulge themselves a strange licentiousness in speaking whatever their humor or their passion dictates. Many, in other respects harmless, (who would not for any thing smite or slay folks,) we may observe with their tongue to commit horrible outrages on any man that comes in their way. Frequently persons very punctual in their dealings are very unjust in their language, cheating and robbing their neighbor of his reputation by envious detraction and hard censure. They who abhor shedding a man's blood will yet, without any scruple or remorse, by calumnious tales and virulent reproaches,

assassinate his credit, and murder his good name, although to him perhaps far more dear and precious than his life. Commonly such as are greatly staunch in other enjoyments of pleasure, are enormously intemperate in speaking, and very incontinent of their tongue: men in all other parts of morality rigorously sober, are often in this very wild and dissolute. Yea, not seldom we may observe that even mighty pretenders to godliness, and zealous practisers of devotion, cannot forbear speaking things plainly repugnant to God's law, and very prejudicial to his honor. Thus it is observable to be now; and thus we may suppose that it always hath been. So of his time St. Hierome (or rather St. Paulinus, in his excellent Epistle to Celantia) testifies: 'Such a lust' (saith he, concerning the ill governance of speech) 'of this evil hath invaded the minds of men, that even those, who have far receded from other vices, do yet fall into this, as into the last snare of the devil.'* So it appears that, among all sorts of good practice, the strict governance of the tongue is least ordinary, and consequently, that it is most admirable and excellent. And this is all I shall say for confirmation of the point asserted.

Now then, as it is our duty to aim at perfection, or to endeavor the attainment of integrity in heart and life, so we should especially labor to govern our tongue, and guard it from offence. To which purpose it is requisite that we should well understand and consider the nature of those several offences to which speech is liable, together with the special pravity, deformity, and inconvenience of each: for did we know and weigh them, we should not surely either like or dare to incur them.

The offences of speech are many and various in kind; so many as there be of thought and of action, unto which they do run parallel: accordingly they well may be distinguished from the difference of objects which they do specially respect. Whence, 1. some of them are committed against God, and confront piety; 2. others against our neighbor, and violate justice, or charity, or peace; 3. others against ourselves, infringing

* Tanta hujus mali libido mentes hominum invasit, ut etiam qui procul ab aliis vitiis recesserunt, in istud tamen, quasi in extremum diaboli laqueum, incidant.—Ad Celant.

sobriety, discretion, or modesty; or, 4. some are of a more general and abstracted nature, rambling through all matters, and crossing all the heads of duty. It is true that in most, or in all offences of speech, there is a complication of impiety, iniquity, and imprudence; for that by all sorts of ill speaking we sin against God, and break his commandment; we injure our neighbor, at least by contagion and bad example; we abuse ourselves, contracting guilt, and exposing ourselves to punishment: also the general vices of speech (unadvisedness and vanity) do constantly adhere to every bad word: yet commonly each evil speech hath a more direct and immediate aspect on some one of those objects, (God, our neighbor, or ourselves,) and is peculiarly repugnant to one of those capital virtues (piety, charity, and sobriety) unto which all our duty is reduced. Now according to this distinction, I should, if time would give leave, describe and dissuade particularly all these sorts of offence: but (since I must be respectful to patience, and careful myself not to offend in speech) I shall confine the rest of my present discourse to the first sort, the offences against piety; and even of them I shall (waiving the rest) only touch two or three, insinuating some reasons why we should eschew them. These are,

I. Speaking blasphemously against God, or reproachfully concerning religion, or to the disgrace of piety, with intent to subvert men's faith in God, or to impair their reverence of him. There hath been a race of men, (and would to God that race were not even till now continued) concerning whom the psalmist said, 'they speak loftily, they set their mouth against the heavens;' who, like the proud Sennacherib, 'lift up their eyes, and exalt their voice against the Holy One of Israel;' who, with the profane Antiochus, 'speak marvellous things against the God of gods.' This of all impieties is the most prodigiously gigantic, the most signal practice of enmity towards God, and downright waging of war against heaven. Of all 'weapons formed against God,' the tongue most notoriously doth impugn him; for we cannot reach heaven with our hands, or immediately assault God by our actions: other ill practice indeed obliquely, or by consequence dishonoreth God, and defameth goodness; but profane discourse is directly levelled at

them, and doth immediately touch them, as its formal objects. Now doing thus argueth an extremity both of folly and naughtiness: for he that doeth it, either believeth the existence of God, and the truth of religion; or he distrusts them. If he doth believe them, what a desperate madness is it in him advisedly to invite certain mischief to his home, and pull down heaviest vengeance on his own head, by opposing the irresistible power, and provoking the inflexible justice of God! What an abominable villany and baseness is it thus to abuse God's immense goodness and mercy, offering such despite to the Author of his being, and free Donor of all the good he enjoys! What a monstrous conspiracy is it of stupidity and perverseness in him, thus wilfully to defy his own welfare, to forfeit all capacity of happiness; to precipitate and plunge himself into a double hell, that of bitter remorse here, that of endless pain hereafter! But if he that reproacheth God and religion be supposed distrustful of their being and reality, neither so is he excusable from like degrees of folly and pravity: for, beside the wild extravagance of such disbelief, against legions of cogent arguments and pregnant testimonies, against all the voice of nature and faith of history, against the settled judgment of wise and sober persons who have studied and considered the point, against the current tradition of all ages, and general consent of mankind; all which to withstand, no less demonstrateth high indiscretion than arrogance; beside also the palpable silliness which he displays, in causelessly (or for no other cause than soothing a fantastic humor) drawing on himself the anger and hatred of all men who are concerned for the interests of their religion, thrusting himself into great dangers and mischiefs thence imminent to him both from private zeal and public law; beside, I say, these evident follies, there is an unsufferable insolence and horrible malice apparent in this practice; for it is no less than the height of insolence thus to affront mankind in matters of highest consideration, and deepest resentment with it; not only thwarting its common notions, but vilifying the chief objects of its highest respect and affection, of its main care and concernment; so making the fiercest invasion that can be on its credit, and charging it with greatest fondness. Who can endure that He, whom he apprehends to be his grand Parent, his best Friend and Be-

nefactor, his great Patron and Sovereign, should in downright terms be defamed or disparaged? Who can patiently bear that, wherein he placeth his utmost hopes and supreme felicity, to be expressly slighted or scorned? Who can take the offering to do this, otherwise than for a most injurious reflexion on his judgment and his practice? If he cannot believe in God, he may let them alone who do: if he will not practise religion, he may forbear to persecute it. He cannot pretend any zeal; it is therefore only pride that moves him to disturb us. So may every man with all the reason in the world complain against the profane talker. Seeing also it is most evident that hearty reverence of God, and a conscientious regard to religion, do produce great benefits to mankind, being indeed the main supports of common honesty and sobriety, the sole curbs, effectually restraining men from unjust fraud and violence, from brutish lusts and passions; since apparently religion prescribeth the best rules, and imposeth the strongest engagements to the performance of those actions, whereby not only men's private welfare is promoted, and ordinary conversation is sweetened, and common life is adorned, but also whereby public order and peace are maintained; since, as Cicero with good reason judged, 'piety being removed, it is probable that justice itself' (of all virtues the best guarded and fortified by human power) 'could not subsist, no faith could be secured, no society could be preserved among men;' it being manifestly vain to fancy that assuredly without religious conscience any one will be a good subject, a true friend, or an honest man; or that any other consideration can induce men to prefer duty to their prince, the prosperity of their country, fidelity toward their friends or neighbors, before their own present interests and pleasure: since, I say, the credit of religion is so very beneficial and useful to mankind, it is plain that he must be exceedingly spiteful and malicious who shall by profane discourse endeavor to supplant or shake it. He that speaketh against God's providence hath assuredly a pique at goodness, and would not have it predominant in the hearts of men. He that disparages religion doth certainly take his aim against virtue, and would not have it practised in the world: his meaning plainly is, to effect, if he can, that men should live like beasts in foul impurities, or like

fiends in mischievous iniquities. Such an one therefore is not to be taken as a simple embracer of error, but as a spiteful designer against common good. For indeed, were any man assured (as none can on so much as probable grounds think it) that religion had been only devised by men as a supplemental aid to reason and force, (drawing them, whom the one could not persuade, nor the other compel, to the practice of things conducible to the public weal;) that it were merely an implement of policy, or a knack to make people loyal to their prince, upright in their dealings, sober in their conversations, moderate in their passions, virtuous in all their doings; it were yet a most barbarous naughtiness and inhumanity in him to assay the overthrow thereof, with the defeating so excellent purposes: he that should attempt it, justly would deserve to be reputed an enemy to the welfare of mankind, to be treated as a pestilent disturber of the world.

II. Another like offence against piety is, to speak loosely and wantonly about holy things, (things nearly related to God or to religion,) to make such things the matter of sport and mockery, to play and trifle with them. But of this I shall have occasion to speak in another discourse.

III. Another grand offence against piety is, rash and vain swearing in common discourse; an offence which now strangely reins and rages in the world, passing about in a specious garb and under glorious titles, as a gentle and graceful quality, a mark of fine breeding, and a point of high gallantry. Who, forsooth, now is the brave spark and complete gentleman, but he that hath the skill and confidence (O heavens! how mean a skill! how mad a confidence!) to lard every sentence with an oath or a curse; making bold at every turn to salute God, fetching him down from heaven to avouch any idle prattle, to second any giddy passion, to concern himself in any trivial affair of his; yea, calling and challenging the Almighty to damn and destroy him! But somewhat to repress these fond conceits and vile practices, let us, I pray, consider,

1. That swearing thus is most expressly and strictly prohibited to us. 'I say unto you, swear not at all; but let your conversation be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;' so our Lord forbids it. 'But

above all things, my brethren, swear not, lest you enter into condemnation :' so doth St. James warn against it. And is it not then prodigious that in Christendom any man should affect to break laws so plain and so severe ; that it should pass here not only for a tolerable, but even for a commendable practice, to violate so manifest and so important a duty ; that so directly to thwart our Lord himself should be a thing not in use only, but in credit and request among Christians? What more palpable affront could be offered to our religion, and to all that is sacred among us ? For what respect or force can we imagine reserved to religion, while a practice so indisputably opposite thereto, in a high degree, is so current and prevalent ?

2. Again, according to the very nature and reason of things, it is evidently an intolerable profaneness, thus unadvisedly to make addresses and appeals to God, invoking his testimony, and demanding his judgment about trifles ; far more such, then it were a high presumption and encroachment on the majesty of a prince, on every petty occasion to break into his presence, and to assail his ears, dragging him to hear and determine concerning it. Whence the very light of nature condemns this practice, and even heathens have loudly declared against it, as derogatory to the reverence of the duty, and unsuitable to the gravity of a worthy man.

3. Swearing indeed is by our holy oracles worthily represented to us as an especial piece of worship and devotion toward God ; wherein, duly performed, we piously acknowlege his chief attributes and singular prerogatives : (his being every where present, and conscious of all we say or do ; his goodness and fidelity, in favoring truth and protecting right ; his justice in rewarding veracity and equity, in avenging falsehood and iniquity ; his being the supreme Lord of all persons, and last Judge in all causes ; to signify and avow these things to God's glory, swearing was instituted,and naturally serveth :) wherefore, as all other acts of devotion, so this grand one especially should never be performed without all serious consideration and humble reverence ; the cause should be certainly just and true, the matter worthy and weighty, the manner grave and solemn, the mind framed to earnest attention, and furnished with devout affections. Those conditions are always

carefully to be observed, which the prophet intimates when he charges thus: 'Thou shalt swear, The lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness.' It is therefore horrible mockery and profanation of a most sacred ordinance, when men presume to use it without any care or consideration, without any respect or awe, on any slight or vain occasion.

4. The doing so is also very prejudicial to human society; for the decision of right, the security of government, and the preservation of peace, do much depend on an awful regard to oaths; and therefore on their being only used in due manner and season: the same do greatly suffer by the contempt or disregard of them, and consequently by their common and careless use. They are the surest bonds by which the consciences of men are tied to the attestation of truth and observance of faith; the which as by rare and reverent use they are kept firm and fast, so by frequent and negligent application of them (by their prostitution to every light and toyish matter) they are quite dissolved, or much slackened. Whence the public seems much concerned that this enormity should be retrenched. For if oaths generally become cheap and vile, what will that of allegiance signify? If men are wont to dally with swearing every where, can they be expected to be strict and serious therein at the bar, or in the church? Will they regard the testimony of God, or dread his judgment, in one place, or at one time, when as every where continually (on any, on no occasion) they dare to affront and contemn them?

5. This way of swearing is also a very uncivil and unmannerly practice. It is not only a gross rudeness toward the main body of men, who justly reverence the name of God, and loathe such abuses thereof; not only an insolent defiance to the common profession and law of our country, which disallows and condemns it; but it is very odious and offensive to any particular society, if at least there be one sober person therein: for to any such person (who retains a sense of goodness, or is anywise concerned for God's honor) no language or behavior can be more disgustful; nothing can more grate the ears or fret the heart of such an one, than this kind of talk: to give him the lie were a compliment, to spit in his face were an obligation, in comparison thereto. Wherefore it is a won-

der, that any person, having in him a spark of ingenuity, or at all pretending to good manners, should find in his heart or deign to use it.

6. This practice also much derogateth from the credit of him that useth it, rendering the truth of whatever he says in reason and justice suspected. For he that is so void of conscience as to swear vainly, what can engage him to speak truly? He that is so loose in one such point of obedience to God and reason, why should we conceive him in regard to another?

7. It can be surely no wrong to distrust him, since he implies himself not to be, even in his own opinion, a credible person; since he judges not his own bare affirmation to deserve belief. For why, if he takes his word to be competently good, doth he back it with such asseverations? why unprovoked calls he God to witness, if he thinks his own honesty sufficient to assure the truth of what he says? An honest man, methinks, should scorn thus to invalidate his own credit, or to detract from the authority of his word, which should stand firm on itself, and not want an oath to support it.

8. To excuse this, the swearer must be forced to confess another ugly fault in speaking, that is, impertinence, or using of waste and insignificant words; to be charged wherewith he is indeed however unavoidably liable. For oaths, as they pass commonly, are mere excrescences of speech, which do nothing else but incumber and deform it: they embellish discourse, just as a wen or a scab does beautify a face; as a spot or a patch do adorn a garment. For to what purpose, I pray, is God's name haled into our idle talk? Why should we so often mention him, when we never mean any thing about him? Into every sentence to foist a dog or a horse, would altogether be as proper and pertinent. These superfluous words signify nothing, but that the speaker little skilleth the use of speech, or the rule of conversation, but meaneth to prate any thing without wit or judgment; that his fancy is very beggarly, and craves the aid of any impertinency to relieve it. One would think that a man of sense should grutch to lend his ears, or incline his attention to such putid stuff; that without nauseating he should not endure to see men lavish time, and squander breath so frivolously.

9. In fine, this offence is particularly most inexcusable, in that it scarce hath any temptation to it, or bringeth with it any advantage; so that it is unaccountable what (beside mere vanity or perverseness) should dispose men thereto. It gratifieth no sense, it yieldeth no profit, it procureth no honor: for the sound of it is not very melodious, nor surely was any man ever preferred for it, or got an estate thereby; it rather to any good ear maketh a horrid and jarring noise, it rather produceth displeasure, damage, and disgrace. Wherefore of all dealers in sin, the swearer is apparently the silliest, and maketh the worst bargains for himself; for he sinneth gratis, and, like those in the prophet, 'selleth his soul for nothing.' An epicure hath some reason, and an extortioner is a man of wisdom, if compared to him; for they enjoy some pleasure, or acquire some gain here, in lieu of their salvation hereafter. But he offends heaven, and abandons happiness, he knows not why, nor for what; a fond humor possesses him, he inconsiderately follows a herd of fops, he affects to play the ape; that is all he can say for himself. Let me be pardoned, if just indignation against a wickedness so contemptible, so heinous, and so senseless, and withal so notorious, and so rife among us, doth extort from me language somewhat tart and vehement.

If men would then but a little consider things, surely this scurvy fashion would be soon discarded, much fitter for the scum of the people than for the flower of the gentry; yea rather, much below any man endued with a scrap of reason, not to say with a grain of religion. Could we bethink ourselves, certainly modest, sober, and pertinent discourse would appear far more generous and manly, than such wild hectoring God Almighty, such rude insulting over the received laws, such ruffianly swaggering against sobriety and goodness. If gentlemen would regard the virtues of their ancestors, (that gallant courage, that solid wisdom, that noble courtesy, which first advanced their families, and severed them from the vulgar,) this degenerate wantonness and dirtiness of speech would return to the dunghill, or rather (which God grant!) would be quite banished from the world.

Finally, as to this whole point, about not offending in our speech against piety, we should consider, that as we ourselves,

with all our members and powers, were chiefly designed and framed to serve and glorify our Maker; (it being withal the greatest perfection of our nature, and the noblest privilege thereof so to do;) so especially our tongue and speaking faculty were given us to declare our admiration and reverence of him, to express our love and gratitude toward him, to celebrate his praises, to acknowlege his benefits, to promote his honor and service. This consequently is the most proper and worthy use thereof; from this it becomes in effect what the psalmist so often terms it, our 'glory,' and the best member we have; as that whereby we far excel all creatures here below; that whereby we consort with the blessed angels above, in distinct utterance of praise to our Creator. Wherefore applying it to any impious discourse, (tending anywise to the dishonor of God, or disparagement of religion,) is a most unnatural abuse thereof, and a vile ingratitude toward him that gave it to us. From which, and from all other offences, God in his mercy preserve us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord, unto whom for ever with heart and tongue let us strive to render all glory and praise. Amen.

SUMMARY OF SERMON XIV.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 4.

MORAL and political aphorisms are seldom couched in such terms that they should be taken precisely as they sound, or according to the widest extent of signification : but commonly need exposition, and admit exception. The best masters of such wisdom are wont to interdict things apt to be perverted, in general forms of speech, leaving the restrictions which the case may require or bear, to be made by the interpreter's discretion ; whence many formal prohibitions may be received as sober cautions.

It is considered how the foregoing observation may be applied to the prohibition in the text.

But though we have some warrant from St. Paul himself, some intimation in the words themselves, for thus expounding it, yet it is manifest there is some kind of speech which he forbids: whence in order to guide our practice, it is needful to distinguish the kinds, and to sever that which is allowable from what is unlawful. Such a resolution shown to be especially needful in this age ; to repress the extravagance and excesses of which, nothing in way of discourse can serve better than a plain declaration when and how the use of facetiousness and jesting is allowable or tolerable ; when it is vain and wicked.

But, first, it may be demanded what the thing spoken of is ; what this *facetiousness* imports ? The question answered by the celebrated definition or description of wit, including every species of it : after which it is shown ; first, when and how such

a manner of speaking may be allowed; then in what matters and ways it should be condemned.

I. Such facetiousness is not absolutely unreasonable or unlawful, which ministers harmless diversion and delight to conversation; that is, such as intrenches not on piety, infringes not charity or justice, and disturbs not peace: for Christianity is not so harsh or envious as to bar us continually from innocent, much less wholesome and useful pleasure, such as human life needs and requires: this point enlarged on. 2. Facetiousness is allowable when it is the most proper instrument for exposing things apparently base and vile to due contempt: derision raised against such things may effectually discountenance them. Example of the prophet Elias with the worshippers of Baal, 1 Kings xviii. 27. 3. Facetious discourse may be particularly commodious for reproving some vices, and reclaiming some persons, as salt for cleansing and curing some sores. It commonly works an easy access to the heart; and many who will not stand a direct reproof, will bear a jocund wipe. 4. Some errors likewise in this way may be most properly and most successfully refuted. Sophistical captiousness and sceptical wantonness is more surely confounded in this than in the simple way of discourse; for it is vain to be in earnest with those who reject the grounds of reasoning. 5. This also is commonly the best way of defence against unjust reproach and slander; for to yield a serious reply to a slanderous reviler, seems to imply that we much consider or deeply resent it. 6. This way may be allowed for the purpose of counterbalancing, and in compliance with the fashion of others. It would be a disadvantage to truth and virtue if their defenders were barred from the use of this weapon, since it is that especially whereby the patrons of error and vice maintain and propagate them. It seems especially requisite to employ it in this age; and since men are so irreclaimably disposed to mirth and laughter, it may be well to divert their humor into a proper channel. 7. More-

over, the warrantableness of this practice in some cases may be thus inferred from a parity of reason. If it be lawful in using rhetorical schemes, poetical strains, involutions of sense in allegories, &c., to depart from the plain and simple way of speech; why may not facetiousness, issuing from the same principles, and directed to the same ends, be likewise used blamelessly? This point enlarged on. 8. It may be added that of old even the sagest and gravest persons affected this kind of discourse, and applied it to noble purposes: examples given. 9. Finally, since it cannot be shown that such a sport of wit and fancy contains an intrinsic and inseparable turpitude, since it may be so used as not to defile or discompose the mind of the speaker, harm the hearer, or derogate from any worthy subject of discourse, &c. but rather sometimes may yield advantage, it cannot well be absolutely and universally condemned. It is the abuse of it that corrupts it; and hence the Apostle's prohibition. To what case or what sorts of jesting this extends is next considered.

II. 1. All profane jesting, all loose and wanton speaking, about holy things, relating to God and religion, is certainly prohibited as an intolerable vain and wicked practice. No man has the heart to jest, nor does he think raillery convenient, in cases nearly touching his life, his estate, or his fame; and are the true life and health of the soul, interest in God's favor, and everlasting bliss, affairs of less moment? Are the joys of paradise and hell torments mere jesting matters? This point enlarged on. 2. All injurious, abusive, scurrilous jesting, which causelessly tends to the disparagement, disgrace, or injury of our neighbor, is also prohibited: this is not urbanity or genuine facetiousness, but uncivil rudeness or vile malignity; the office of base, ungenerous spirits. The reputation of men is too noble a sacrifice to be offered up to vain-glory or ill humor. True festivity is called *salt;* and such it should be, giving a smart but savory relish to discourse, exciting appetite, not creating disgust, &c.

Especially this scurrilous and scoffing way is then most detestable, when it not only exposes the blemishes and infirmities of men, but abuses piety and virtue themselves: which practice tends in the highest degree to the disparagement and discouragement of goodness; growing proportionally more criminal as it presumes to attack persons eminent in dignity or worth. In fine, no jesting is allowable which is not thoroughly innocent; and it is strange that any men should from so mean and silly a practice as that of *foolish jesting* expect commendation, or that others should bestow it. Neither is it an argument of considerable ability in him that happens to please by this way: a slender faculty will serve the turn, &c. 3. Consideration of facetiousness in obscene matters may well be omitted. Such things, as St. Paul says, *are not so much as to be named among* Christians. 4. All *unseasonable* jesting is blameable. As there are proper seasons of relaxation, so there are some times and circumstances of things when it becomes us to be serious in mind, grave in demeanor, and plain in discourse; as in the presence of superiors, and especially in the performance of sacred offices. In deliberations and debates about affairs of great importance, the simple is the proper manner of speaking, since facetious speech there serves only to obstruct business, lose time, and protract the result. It is improper to be facetious with those who are in a sad or afflicted condition; also with those who desire to be serious, and like not the humor. 5. To affect, admire, or highly value this way of speaking, and thence to be drawn into an immoderate use of it, is blameable. The proper object of man, the grand drift of human life, is to follow reason, that noble spark kindled in us from heaven; not to sooth fancy, that shallow and giddy power, which is able to perform nothing worthy of much regard. In particular, to do so is unworthy of a Christian, who is advanced to so high a rank and to such glorious relations: this point enlarged on. 6. Vain-glorious ostentation in this way is very blameable. All

ambition and all vanity, on whatever ground they may be founded, are unreasonable and silly : but yet when founded on some real ability, or some useful skill, are wise and manly in comparison with this, which stands on a foundation manifestly slight and weak. 7. In the last place, it is our duty never so far to engage ourselves in this way as thereby to lose or impair that habitual seriousness, modesty, and sobriety of mind, which become Christians, who should always keep their souls intent on their *high calling* and grand interests. Concluding exhortations.

SERMON XIV.

AGAINST FOOLISH TALKING AND JESTING.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. V.—VERSE 4.

—Nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient.

Moral and political aphorisms are seldom couched in such terms, that they should be taken as they sound precisely, or according to the widest extent of signification; but do commonly need exposition, and admit exception: otherwise frequently they would not only clash with reason and experience, but interfere, thwart, and supplant one another. The best masters of such wisdom are wont to interdict things, apt by unseasonable or excessive use to be perverted, in general forms of speech, leaving the restrictions, which the case may require or bear, to be made by the hearer's or interpreter's discretion: whence many seemingly formal prohibitions are to be received only as sober cautions. This observation may be particularly supposed applicable to this precept of St. Paul, which seemeth universally to forbid a practice commended (in some cases and degrees) by philosophers as virtuous, not disallowed by reason, commonly affected by men, often used by wise and good persons; from which consequently if our religion did wholly debar us, it would seem chargeable with somewhat too uncouth austerity and sourness: from imputations of which kind as in its temper and frame it is really most free, (it never quenching natural light, or cancelling the dictates of sound reason, but confirming and improving them;) so it carefully declineth them, enjoining us, that 'if there be any things' προσφιλῆ,

('lovely,' or grateful to men,) 'any things' εὔφημα, ('of good report' and repute,) 'if there be any virtue and any praise,' (any thing in the common apprehensions of men held worthy and laudable,) we should 'mind those things,' that is, should yield them a regard answerable to the esteem they carry among rational and sober persons.

Whence it may seem requisite so to interpret and determine St. Paul's meaning here concerning εὐτραπελία, (that is, facetious speech or raillery, by our translators rendered 'jesting,') that he may consist wth himself, and be reconciled to Aristotle, who placeth this practice in the rank of virtues; or that religion and reason may well accord in the case; supposing that, if there be any kind of facetiousness innocent and reasonable, conformable to good manners, (regulated by common sense, and consistent with the tenor of Christian duty, that is, not transgressing the bounds of piety, charity, and sobriety,) St. Paul did not intend to discountenance or prohibit that kind.

For thus expounding and limiting his intent, we have some warrant from himself, some fair intimations in the words here. For, first, what sort of facetious speech he aimeth at, he doth imply by the fellow he coupleth therewith; μωρολογία, saith he, ἢ εὐτραπελία, 'foolish talking,' or 'facetiousness:' such facetiousness therefore he toucheth as doth include folly, in the matter or manner thereof. Then he farther determineth it, by adjoining a peculiar quality thereof, unprofitableness or impertinency; τὰ μὴ ἀνήκοντα, 'which are not pertinent,' or conducible to any good purpose: whence may be collected, that it is a frivolous and idle sort of facetiousness which he condemneth.

But, however, manifest it is that some kind thereof he doth earnestly forbid: whence, in order to the guidance of our practice, it is needful to distinguish the kinds, severing that which is allowable from that which is unlawful; that so we may be satisfied in the case, and not on the one hand ignorantly transgress our duty, nor on the other trouble ourselves with scruples, others with censures, on the use of warrantable liberty therein.

And such a resolution seemeth indeed especially needful in this our age, (this pleasant and jocular age,) which is so infi-

nitely addicted to this sort of speaking, that it scarce doth affect or prize any thing near so much; all reputation appearing now to veil and stoop to that of being a wit: to be learned, to be wise, to be good, are nothing in comparison thereto; even to be noble and rich are inferior things, and afford no such glory. Many at least, to purchase this glory, to be deemed considerable in this faculty, and enrolled among the wits, do not only 'make shipwreck of conscience,' abandon virtue, and forfeit all pretences to wisdom; but neglect their estates, and prostitute their honor: so to the private damage of many particular persons, and with no small prejudice to the public, are our times possessed and transported with this humor. To repress the excess and extravagance whereof, nothing in way of discourse can serve better than a plain declaration when and how such a practice is allowable or tolerable; when it is wicked and vain, unworthy of a man endued with reason, and pretending to honesty or honor.

This I shall in some measure endeavor to perform.

But, first, it may be demanded what the thing we speak of is, or what this facetiousness doth import? To which question I might reply as Democritus did to him that asked the definition of a man, 'It is that which we all see and know:' any one better apprehends what it is by acquaintance, than I can inform him by description. It is indeed a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale: sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound: sometimes it is wrapped in a dress of humorous expression: sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude: sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting, or cleverly retorting an objection: sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of

speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense: sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture passeth for it: sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being: sometimes it riseth from a lucky hitting on what is strange, sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose: often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable and inexplicable, being answerable to the numberless rovings of fancy and windings of language. It is, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way, (such as reason teacheth and proveth things by,) which by a pretty surprising uncouthness in conceit or expression doth affect and amuse the fancy, stirring in it some wonder, and breeding some delight thereto. It raiseth admiration, as signifying a nimble sagacity of apprehension, a special felicity of invention, a vivacity of spirit, and reach of wit more than vulgar: it seeming to argue a rare quickness of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable skill, that he can dexterously accommodate them to the purpose before him; together with a lively briskness of humor, not apt to damp those sportful flashes of imagination. (Whence in Aristotle* such persons are termed ἐπιδέξιοι, dexterous men; and εὔτροποι, men of facile or versatile manners, who can easily turn themselves to all things, or turn all things to themselves.) It also procureth delight, by gratifying curiosity with its rareness or semblance of difficulty; (as monsters, not for their beauty, but their rarity; as juggling tricks, not for their use, but their abstruseness, are beheld with pleasure;) by diverting the mind from its road of serious thoughts; by instilling gaiety and airiness of spirit; by provoking to such dispositions of spirit in way of emulation or complaisance; and by seasoning matters, otherwise distasteful or insipid, with an unusual, and thence grateful tang.

But saying no more concerning what it is, and leaving it to your imagination and experience to supply the defect of such

* Eth. iv. 8.

explication, I shall address myself to show, first, when and how such a manner of speaking may be allowed; then, in what matters and ways it should be condemned.

I. Such facetiousness is not absolutely unreasonable or unlawful, which ministereth harmless divertisement and delight to conversation: (harmless, I say, that is, not intrenching on piety, not infringing charity or justice, not disturbing peace.) For Christianity is not so tetrical, so harsh, so envious, as to bar us continually from innocent, much less from wholesome and useful pleasure, such as human life doth need or require. And if jocular discourse may serve to good purposes of this kind; if it may be apt to raise our drooping spirits, to allay our irksome cares, to whet our blunted industry, to recreate our minds being tired and cloyed with graver occupations; if it may breed alacrity, or maintain good humor among us; if it may conduce to sweeten conversation and endear society; then is it not inconvenient or unprofitable. If for those ends we may use other recreations, employing on them our ears and eyes, our hands and feet, our other instruments of sense and motion; why may we not as well to them accommodate our organs of speech and interior sense? Why should those games which excite our wits and fancies be less reasonable, than those whereby our grosser parts and faculties are exercised? Yea, why are not those more reasonable, since they are performed in a manly way, and have in them a smack of reason; seeing also they may be so managed, as not only to divert and please, but to improve and profit the mind, rousing and quickening it, yea, sometimes enlightening and instructing it, by good sense conveyed in jocular expression?

It would surely be hard, that we should be tied ever to knit the brow and squeeze the brain, (to be always sadly dumpish, or seriously pensive,) that all divertisement of mirth and pleasantness should be shut out of conversation: and how can we better relieve our minds, or relax our thoughts, how can we be more ingeniously cheerful, in what more kindly way can we exhilarate ourselves and others, than by thus 'sacrificing to the graces,' as the ancients called it? Are not some persons always, and all persons sometimes, uncapable otherwise to divert themselves than by such discourse? Shall we, I say,

have no recreation? or must our recreations be ever clownish or childish, consisting merely in rustical efforts, or in petty sleights of bodily strength and activity? Were we, in fine, obliged ever to talk like philosophers, assigning dry reasons for every thing, and dropping grave sentences on all occasions, would it not much deaden human life, and make ordinary conversation exceedingly to languish? Facetiousness therefore in such cases, and to such purposes, may be allowable.

2. Facetiousness is allowable when it is the most proper instrument of exposing things apparently base and vile to due contempt. It is many times expedient that things really ridiculous should appear such, that they may be sufficiently loathed and shunned; and to render them such is the part of a facetious wit, and usually can only be compassed thereby. When to impugn them with downright reason, or to check them by serious discourse, would signify nothing; then representing them in a shape strangely ugly to the fancy, and thereby raising derision at them, may effectually discountenance them. Thus did the prophet Elias expose the wicked superstition of those who worshipped Baal: 'Elias,' saith the text, 'mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.' By which one pregnant instance it appeareth, that reasoning pleasantly abusive in some cases may be useful. The holy Scripture doth not indeed use it frequently; (it not suiting the divine simplicity and stately gravity thereof to do so;) yet its condescension thereto at any time sufficiently doth authorise a cautious use thereof. When sarcastical twitches are needful to pierce the thick skins of men, to correct their lethargic stupidity, to rouse them out of their drowsy negligence; then may they well be applied: when plain declarations will not enlighten people, to discern the truth and weight of things, and blunt arguments will not penetrate to convince or persuade them to their duty; then doth reason freely resign its place to wit, allowing it to undertake its work of instruction and reproof.

3. Facetious discourse particularly may be commodious for reproving some vices and reclaiming some persons; (as salt for cleansing and curing some sores.) It commonly procureth a

more easy access to the ears of men, and worketh a stronger impression on their hearts, than other discourse could do. Many who will not stand a direct reproof, and cannot abide to be plainly admonished of their fault, will yet indure to be pleasantly rubbed, and will patiently bear a jocund wipe; though they abominate all language purely bitter or sour, yet they can relish discourse having in it a pleasant tartness: you must not chide them as their master, but you may gibe with them as their companion: if you do that, they will take you for pragmatical and haughty; this they may interpret friendship and freedom. Most men are of that temper; and particularly the genius of divers persons, whose opinions and practices we should strive to correct, doth require not a grave and severe, but a free and merry way of treating them. For what can be more unsuitable and unpromising, than to seem serious with those who are not so themselves, or demure with the scornful? If we design either to please or vex them into better manners, we must be as sportful in a manner, or as contemptuous as themselves. If we mean to be heard by them, we must talk in their own fashion, with humor and jollity: if we will instruct them, we must withal somewhat divert them: we must seem to play with them, if we think to convey any sober thoughts into them. They scorn to be formally advised or taught; but they may perhaps be slily laughed and lured into a better mind. If by such complaisance we can inveigle those dotterels to hearken to us, we may induce them to consider farther, and give reason some competent scope, some fair play with them. Good reason may be apparelled in the garb of wit, and therein will securely pass, whither in its native homeliness it could never arrive: and being come thither, it with especial advantage may impress good advice; making an offender more clearly to see, and more deeply to feel his miscarriage; being represented to his fancy in a strain somewhat rare and remarkable, yet not so fierce and frightful. The severity of reproof is tempered, and the reprover's anger disguised thereby. The guilty person cannot but observe that he who thus reprehends him is not disturbed or out of humor, and that he rather pitieth than hateth him; which breedeth a veneration to him, and imparteth no small efficacy to his whole-

some suggestions. Such a reprehension, while it forceth a smile without, doth work remorse within; while it seemeth to tickle the ear, doth sting the heart. In fine, many whose foreheads are brazed and hearts steeled against all blame, are yet not of proof against derision; divers, who never will be reasoned, may be rallied into better order: in which cases raillery, as an instrument of so important good, as a servant of the best charity, may be allowed.

4. Some errors likewise in this way may be most properly and most successfully confuted; such as deserve not, and hardly can bear a serious and solid confutation. He that will contest things apparently decided by sense and experience, or who disavows clear principles of reason, approved by general consent, and the common sense of men, what other hopeful way is there of proceeding with him than pleasantly to explode his conceits? To dispute seriously with him were trifling; to trifle with him is the proper course: since he rejecteth the grounds of reasoning, it is vain to be in earnest: what then remains but to jest with him? To deal seriously were to yield too much respect to such a baffler, and too much weight to his fancies; to raise the man too high in his courage and conceit; to make his pretences seem worthy the considering and canvassing. Briefly, perverse obstinacy is more easily quelled, petulant impudence is sooner dashed, sophistical captiousness is more safely eluded, sceptical wantonness is more surely confounded in this, than in the simple way of discourse.

5. This way is also commonly the best way of defence against unjust reproach and obloquy. To yield to a slanderous reviler a serious reply, or to make a formal plea against his charge, doth seem to imply that we much consider or deeply resent it; whereas by pleasant reflexion on it we signify, the matter only deserves contempt, and that we take ourselves unconcerned therein. So easily without care or trouble may the brunts of malice be declined or repelled.

6. This way may be allowed in way of counterbalancing and in compliance to the fashion of others. It would be a disadvantage unto truth and virtue, if their defenders were barred from the use of this weapon; since it is that especially whereby the patrons of error and vice do maintain and propagate them.

They being destitute of good reason, do usually recommend their absurd and pestilent notions by a pleasantness of conceit and expression, bewitching the fancies of shallow hearers, and inveigling heedless persons to a liking of them : and if, for reclaiming such people, the folly of those seducers may in like manner be displayed as ridiculous and odious, why should that advantage be refused? It is wit that wageth the war against reason, against virtue, against religion ; wit alone it is that perverteth so many, and so greatly corrupteth the world; it may therefore be needful, in our warfare for those dearest concerns, to sort the manner of our fighting with that of our adversaries, and with the same kind of arms to protect goodness, whereby they do assail it. If wit may happily serve under the banner of truth and virtue, we may impress it for that service; and good it were to rescue so worthy a faculty from so vile abuse. It is the right of reason and piety to command that and all other endowments; folly and impiety do only usurp them : just and fit therefore it is to wrest them out of so bad hands to revoke them to their right use and duty.

It doth especially seem requisite to do it in this age, wherein plain reason is deemed a dull and heavy thing. When the mental appetite of men is become like the corporeal, and cannot relish any food without some piquant sauce, so that people will rather starve than live on solid fare: when substantial and sound discourse findeth small attention or acceptance : in such a time, he that can, may in complaisance, and for fashion's sake, vouchsafe to be facetious: an ingenious vein coupled with an honest mind may be a good talent: he shall employ wit commendably who by it can further the interests of goodness, alluring men first to listen, then inducing them to consent unto its wholesome dictates and precepts.

Since men are so irreclaimably disposed to mirth and laughter, it may be well to set them in the right pin, to divert their humor into the proper channel, that they may please themselves in deriding things which deserve it, ceasing to laugh at that which requireth reverence or horror.

It may also be expedient to put the world out of conceit, that all sober and good men are a sort of such lumpish or sour people, that they can utter nothing but flat and drowsy stuff;

by showing them that such persons, when they see cause, in condescension, can be as brisk and smart as themselves; when they please can speak pleasantly and wittily as well as gravely and judiciously. This way at least, in respect to the various palates of men, may for variety sake be sometimes attempted, when other means do fail: when many strict and subtile arguings, many zealous declamations, many wholesome serious discourses have been spent, without effecting the extirpation of bad principles, or conversion of those who abet them; this course may be tried, and some perhaps may be reclaimed thereby.

7. Farthermore, the warrantableness of this practice in some cases may be inferred from a parity of reason, in this manner: if it be lawful, (as by the best authorities it plainly doth appear to be,) in using rhetorical schemes, poetical strains, involutions of sense in allegories, fables, parables, and riddles, to discoast from the plain and simple way of speech; why may not facetiousness, issuing from the same principles, directed to the same ends, serving to like purposes, be likewise used blamelessly? If those exorbitancies of speech may be accommodated to instil good doctrine into the head, to excite good passions in the heart, to illustrate and adorn the truth, in a delightful and taking way; and facetious discourse be sometime notoriously conducible to the same ends; why, they being retained, should it be rejected? especially considering how difficult often it may be to distinguish those forms of discourse from this, or exactly to define the limits which sever rhetoric and raillery. Some elegant figures and tropes of rhetoric (biting sarcasms, sly ironies, strong metaphors, lofty hyperboles, paronomasies, oxymorons, and the like, frequently used by the best speakers, and not seldom even by sacred writers) do lie very near on the confines of jocularity, and are not easily differenced from those sallies of wit wherein the lepid way doth consist: so that were this wholly culpable, it would be matter of scruple whether one hath committed a fault or no, when he meant only to play the orator, or the poet; and hard surely it would be to find a judge who could precisely set out the difference between a jest and a flourish.

8. I shall only add, that of old even the sagest and gravest persons (persons of most rigid and severe virtue) did much affect

this kind of discourse, and did apply it to noble purposes. The great introducer of moral wisdom among the pagans did practise it so much, (by it repressing the windy pride and fallacious vanity of sophisters in his time,) that he thereby got the name of ὁ εἴρων, 'the droll:' and the rest of those who pursued his design, do by numberless stories and apophthegms recorded of them, appear well skilled, and much delighted in this way. Many great princes, (as Augustus Cæsar for one, many of whose jests are extant in Macrobius,) many grave statesmen, (as Cicero particularly, who composed several books of jests,) many famous captains, (as Fabius, M. Cato the Censor, Scipio Africanus, Epaminondas, Themistocles, Phocion, and many others, whose witty sayings, together with their martial exploits, are reported by historians,) have pleased themselves herein, and made it a condiment of their weighty businesses. So that practising thus, within certain rule and compass, we cannot err without great patterns and mighty patrons.*

9. In fine, since it cannot be shown that such a sportfulness of wit and fancy doth contain an intrinsic and inseparable turpitude; since it may be so cleanly, handsomely, and innocently used, as not to defile or discompose the mind of the speaker, not to wrong or harm the hearer, not to derogate from any worthy subject of discourse, not to infringe decency, to disturb peace, to violate any of the grand duties incumbent on us, (piety, charity, justice, sobriety,) but rather sometimes may yield advantage in those respects; it cannot well absolutely and universally be condemned; and when not used on improper matter, in an unfit manner, with excessive measure, at undue season, to evil purpose, it may be allowed. It is bad objects, or bad adjuncts, which do spoil its indifference and innocence: it is the abuse thereof, to which (as all pleasant things are dangerous, and apt to degenerate into baits of intemperance and excess) it is very liable, that corrupteth it; and seemeth to be the ground why in so general terms it is prohibited by the

* The two greatest men and gravest divines of their time, (S. Greg. Naz. and S. Basil.) could entertain one another with facetious epistles. Greg. Naz. Ep. vii. ad Basil. Σὺ σκῶπτε καὶ διάσυρε, &c. Et Ep. viii.

Apostle. Which prohibition to what cases, or what sorts of jesting it extendeth, we come now to declare.

II. 1. All profane jesting, all speaking loosely and wantonly about holy things, (things nearly related to God and religion,) making such things the matters of sport and mockery, playing and trifling with them, is certainly prohibited, as an intolerably vain and wicked practice. It is an infallible sign of a vain and light spirit, which considereth little, and cannot distinguish things, to talk slightly concerning persons of high dignity, to whom especial respect is due; or about matters of great importance, which deserve very serious consideration. No man speaketh, or should speak, of his prince that which he hath not weighed, whether it will consist with that veneration which should be preserved inviolate to him: and is not the same, is not much greater care to be used in regard to the incomparably great and glorious Majesty of heaven? Yes, surely: as we should not without great awe think of him; so we should not presume to mention his name, his word, his institutions, any thing immediately belonging to him, without profoundest reverence and dread. It is the most enormous sauciness that can be imagined, to speak petulantly or pertly concerning him: especially considering, that whatever we do say about him, we do utter it in his presence, and to his very face. 'For there is not,' as the holy psalmist considered, 'a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.' No man also hath the heart to droll, or thinks raillery convenient in cases nearly touching his life, his health, his estate, or his fame: and are the true life and health of our soul, are interest in God's favor and mercy, are everlasting glory and bliss, affairs of less moment? Are the treasures and joys of paradise, or the damages and torments in hell more jesting matters? No certainly, no; in all reason therefore it becometh us, and it infinitely concerneth us, whenever we think of these things, to be in best earnest, always to speak of them in most sober sadness.

The proper objects of common mirth and sportful divertisement are mean and petty matters; any thing at least is by playing therewith made such: great things are thereby dimi-

nished and debased; especially sacred things do grievously suffer thence, being with extreme indecency and indignity depressed beneath themselves, when they become the subjects of flashy wit, or the entertainments of frothy merriment: to sacrifice their honor to our vain pleasure, being like the ridiculous fondness of that people, which, as Ælian reporteth, worshipping a fly, did offer up an ox thereto. These things were by God instituted, and proposed to us for purposes quite different; to compose our hearts, and settle our fancies in a most serious frame; to breed inward satisfaction, and joy purely spiritual; to exercise our most solemn thoughts, and employ our gravest discourses: all our speech therefore about them should be wholesome, apt to afford good instruction, or to excite good affections; 'good,' as St. Paul speaketh, 'for the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.'

If we must be facetious and merry, the field is wide and spacious; there are matters enough in the world beside these most august and dreadful things, to try our faculties and please our humor with; every where light and ludicrous things occur: it therefore doth argue a marvellous poverty of wit, and barrenness of invention, no less than a strange defect of goodness and want of discretion, in those who can devise no other subjects to frolic on beside these, of all most improper and perilous; who cannot seem ingenious under the charge of so highly trespassing on decency, disclaiming wisdom, wounding the ears of others, and their own consciences. Seem ingenious, I say; for seldom those persons really are such, or are capable to discover any wit in a wise and manly way. It is not the excellency of their fancies, which in themselves usually are sorry and insipid enough, but the uncouthness of their presumption; not their extraordinary wit, but their prodigious rashness, which is to be admired. They are gazed on, as the doers of bold tricks, who dare perform that which no sober man will attempt: they do indeed rather deserve themselves to be laughed at, than their conceits. For what can be more ridiculous than we do make ourselves, when we thus fiddle and fool with our own souls; when, to make vain people merry, we incense God's earnest displeasure; when, to raise a fit of

present laughter, we expose ourselves to endless wailing and woe; when, to be reckoned wits, we prove ourselves stark wild? Surely to this case we may accommodate that of a truly great wit, King Solomon; 'I said of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What doeth it?'

2. All injurious, abusive, scurrilous jesting, which causelessly or needlessly tendeth to the disgrace, damage, vexation, or prejudice in any kind of our neighbor, (provoking his displeasure, grating on his modesty, stirring passion in him,) is also prohibited. When men, to raise an admiration of their wit, to please themselves, or gratify the humor of other men, do expose their neighbor to scorn and contempt, making ignominious reflexions on his person or his actions, taunting his real imperfections, or fastening imaginary ones on him, they transgress their duty, and abuse their wits; it is not urbanity, or genuine facetiousness, but uncivil rudeness, or vile malignity. To do thus, as it is the office of mean and base spirits, unfit for any worthy or weighty employments, so it is full of inhumanity, of iniquity, of indecency and folly. For the weaknesses of men, of what kind soever, (natural or moral, in quality or in act,) considering whence they spring, and how much we are all subject to them, and do need excuse for them, do in equity challenge compassion to be had of them; not complacency to be taken in them, or mirth drawn from them; they, in respect to common humanity, should rather be studiously connived at and concealed, or mildly excused, than wilfully laid open, and wantonly descanted on; they rather are to be deplored secretly than openly derided.

The reputation of men is too noble a sacrifice to be offered up to vain glory, fond pleasure, or ill humor; it is a good far more dear and precious, than to be prostituted for idle sport and divertisement. It becometh us not to trifle with that, which in common estimation is of so great moment; to play rudely with a thing so very brittle, yet of so vast price; which being once broken or cracked, it is very hard, and scarce possible, to repair. A small transient pleasure, a tickling the ears, wagging the lungs, forming the face into a smile, a giggle, or a hum, are not to be purchased with the grievous distaste and smart, perhaps with the real damage and mischief of our neigh-

bor, which attend on contempt.* This is not jesting surely, but bad earnest: it is wild mirth, which is the mother of grief to those whom we should tenderly love; it is unnatural sport, which breedeth displeasure in them whose delight it should promote, whose liking it should procure: it crosseth the nature and design of this way of speaking; which is to cement and ingratiate society, to render conversation pleasant and sprightly, for mutual satisfaction and comfort.

True festivity is called 'salt;' and such it should be, giving a smart, but savory relish to discourse; exciting an appetite, not irritating disgust; cleansing sometime, but never creating sore: and, *ἐὰν μωρανθῇ*, 'if it become thus insipid,' or unsavory, 'it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.' Such jesting which doth not season wholesome or harmless discourse, but giveth a haut-gout to putid and poisonous stuff, gratifying distempered palates and corrupt stomachs, is indeed odious and despicable folly, 'to be cast out' with loathing, 'to be trodden under foot' with contempt. If a man offends in this sort to please himself, it is scurvy malignity; if to delight others, it is base servility and flattery: on the first score he is a buffoon to himself; on the last, a fool to others. And well in common speech are such practisers so termed, the grounds of that practice being so vain, and the effect so unhappy. 'The heart of fools,' saith the wise man, 'is in the house of mirth;' meaning, it seems, especially such hurtfully-wanton mirth: for it is, as he farther tells us, the property of fools to delight in doing harm: 'It is a sport to a fool to do mischief.' †Is it not in earnest most palpable folly

* Prov. xxvi. 18. 19. As a mad man, who casteth fire-brands, arrows, and death; so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor, and saith, Am not I in sport?

Οἱ ἐνεδρεύοντες τοὺς φίλους.—LXX.

† Fools make a mock of sin.—Prov. xiv. 9.

Potius amicum quam dictum perdidi.

——— dummodo risum

Excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico.—Hor. Sat i. 4.

——— dicax idem, et Tiberium acerbis facetiis irridere solitus, quarum apud præpotentes in longum memoria est.—Tac. v. Ann. p. 184.

for so mean ends to do so great harm; to disoblige men in sport; to lose friends, and get enemies, for a conceit; out of a light humor to provoke fierce wrath, and breed tough hatred; to engage oneself consequently very far in strife, danger, and trouble? No way certainly is more apt to produce such effects than this; nothing more speedily inflameth, or more thoroughly engageth men, or sticketh longer in men's hearts and memories, than bitter taunts and scoffs: whence this honey soon turns into gall; these jolly comedies do commonly terminate in woful tragedies.

Especially this scurrilous and scoffing way is then most detestable, when it not only exposeth the blemishes and infirmities of men, but abuseth piety and virtue themselves; flouting persons for their constancy in devotion, or their strict adherence to a conscientious practice of duty; aiming to effect that which Job complaineth of, 'the just upright man is laughed to scorn;' resembling those whom the psalmist thus describeth, 'who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the perfect;' serving good men as Jeremy was served, 'The word of the Lord,' saith he, 'was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily.'

This practice doth evidently in the highest degree tend to the disparagement and discouragement of goodness; aiming to expose it, and to render men ashamed thereof; and it manifestly proceedeth from a desperate corruption of mind, from a mind hardened and emboldened, sold and enslaved to wickedness: whence they who deal therein are in holy Scripture represented as egregious sinners, or persons superlatively wicked, under the name of *scorners;* (λοιμοὺς, *pests*, or pestilent men, the Greek translators call them, properly enough in regard to the effects of their practice;) concerning whom the wise man, signifying how God will meet with them in their own way, saith, 'Surely the Lord scorneth the scorners.' Ἐμπαίκτας, *scoffers*, (or *mockers*,) St. Peter termeth them, 'who walk according to their own lusts;' who not being willing to practise, are ready to deride virtue; thereby striving to seduce others into their pernicious courses.

This offence also proportionably groweth more criminal, as

it presumeth to reach persons eminent in dignity or worth, unto whom special veneration is appropriate. This adjoineth sauciness to scurrility, and advanceth the wrong thereof into a kind of sacrilege. It is not only injustice, but profaneness, to 'abuse the gods.'* Their station is a sanctuary from all irreverence and reproach; they are seated on high, that we may only look up to them with respect; their defects are not to be seen, or not to be touched by malicious or wanton wits, by spiteful or scornful tongues: the diminution of their credit is a public mischief, and the state itself doth suffer in their becoming objects of scorn; not only themselves are vilified and degraded, but the great affairs they manage are obstructed, the justice they administer is disparaged thereby.

In fine no jesting is allowable, which is not throughly innocent: it is an unworthy perverting of wit, to employ it in biting and scratching; in working prejudice to any man's reputation or interest; in needlessly incensing any man's anger or sorrow; in raising animosities, dissensions, and feuds among any.

Whence it is somewhat strange that any men from so mean and silly a practice should expect commendation, or that any should afford regard thereto; the which it is so far from meriting, that indeed contempt and abhorrence are due to it. Men do truly more render themselves despicable than others, when, without just ground or reasonable occasion, they do attack others in this way. That such a practice doth ever find any encouragement or acceptance, whence can it proceed, but from the bad nature and small judgment of some persons? For to any man who is endued with any sense of goodness, and hath a competence of true wit, or a right knowlege of good manners, (who knows—*inurbanum lepido seponere dicto*,) it cannot but be unsavory and loathsome. The repute it obtaineth is in all respects unjust. So would it appear, not only were the cause to be decided in the court of morality, because it consists not with virtue and wisdom; but even before any

* Πόῤῥω δὲ τοῦτο Χριστιανοῦ, τὸ κωμῳδεῖν.—Chrys. in Eph. Or. 17. Γλῶσσαν ἔχεις, οὐχ ἵνα ἕτερον κωμωδήσῃς, ἀλλ' ἵνα εὐχαριστήσῃς τῷ Θεῷ.—Idem.

competent judges of wit itself. For he overthrows his own pretence, and cannot reasonably claim any interest in wit, who doth thus behave himself: he prejudgeth himself to want wit, who cannot descry fit matter to divert himself or others: he discovereth a great straitness and sterility of good invention, who cannot in all the wide field of things find better subjects of discourse; who knows not how to be ingenious within reasonable compass, but to pick up a sorry conceit is forced to make excursions beyond the bounds of honesty and decency.

Neither is it any argument of considerable ability in him that haps to please this way: a slender faculty will serve the turn. The sharpness of his speech cometh not from wit so much as from choler, which furnisheth the lowest inventions with a kind of pungent expression, and giveth an edge to every spiteful word:* so that any dull wretch doth seem to scold eloquently and ingeniously. Commonly also satirical taunts do owe their seeming piquancy, not to the speaker or his words, but to the subject and the hearers; the matter conspiring with the bad nature or the vanity of men, who love to laugh at any rate, and to be pleased at the expense of other men's repute; conceiting themselves extolled by the depression of their neighbor, and hoping to gain by his loss. Such customers they are that maintain the bitter wits, who otherwise would want trade, and might go a-begging. For commonly they who seem to excel this way are miserably flat in other discourse, and most dully serious: they have a particular unaptness to describe any good thing, or commend any worthy person; being destitute of right ideas, and proper terms answerable to such purposes: their representations of that kind are absurd and unhandsome; their elogies (to use their own way of speaking) are in effect satires, and they can hardly more abuse a man than by attempting to commend him; like those in the prophet, who were 'wise to do ill, but to do well had no knowlege.'

3. I pass by that it is very culpable to be facetious in obscene and smutty matters. Such things are not to be dis-

* Obtrectatio et livor pronis auribus accipiuntur: quippe adulationi fœdum crimen servitutis, malignitati falsa species libertatis inest.—Tac. Hist. i. init.

coursed on either in jest or in earnest; they must not, as St. Paul saith, be 'so much as named among Christians:' to meddle with them is not to disport, but to defile oneself and others. There is indeed no more certain sign of a mind utterly debauched from piety and virtue, than affecting such talk. But farther,

4. All unseasonable jesting is blameable. As there are some proper seasons of relaxation, when we may *desipere in loco*; so are there some times and circumstances of things, wherein it concerneth and becometh men to be serious in mind, grave in demeanor, and plain in discourse; when to sport in this way is to do indecently, or uncivilly, to be impertinent, or troublesome.*

It comporteth not well with the presence of superiors, before whom it becometh us to be composed and modest: much less with the performance of sacred offices, which require an earnest attention, and most serious frame of mind.

In deliberations and debates about affairs of great importance, the simple manner of speaking to the point is the proper, easy, clear, and compendious way: facetious speech there serves only to obstruct and entangle business, to lose time, and protract the result.† The shop and exchange will scarce endure jesting in their lower transactions: the senate, the court of justice, the church do much more exclude it from their more weighty consultations. Whenever it justleth out, or hindereth the dispatch of other serious business, taking up the room or swallowing the time due to it, or indisposing the minds of the audience to attend it, then it is unseasonable and pestilent. Παίζειν, ἵνα σπουδάζῃς,‡ 'to play, that we may be seriously busy,' is the good rule of Anacharsis, implying the subordination of sport to business, as a condiment and furtherance, not an impediment or clog thereto. He that for his sport neglects his business, deserves indeed to be reckoned among children;

* Vitandum ne petulans, ne superbum, ne loco, ne tempori alienum, ne præparatum et domo allatum videatur.—Quint.

† Μή μοι τὰ κόμψ', ἀλλ' ὧν πόλει δεῖ.—Eurip. Arist. Pol. ii. 4.

‡ Arist. Eth. x. 6.

and children's fortune will attend him, to be pleased with toys, and to fail of substantial profit.

It is, again, improper (because indeed uncivil and inhuman) to jest with persons that are in a sad or afflicted condition;* as arguing want of due considering or due commiserating their case: it appears a kind of insulting on their misfortune, and is apt to foment their grief. Even in our own case, on any disastrous occurrence to ourselves, it would not be seemly to frolic it thus; it would signify want of due regard to the frowns of God and the strokes of his hand; it would cross the wise man's advice, 'In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.'

It is also not seasonable, or civil, to be jocund in this way with those who desire to be serious, and like not the humor. Jocularity should not be forcibly obtruded, but by a kindly conspiracy, or tacit compact, slip into conversation: consent and complaisance give all the life thereto. Its design is to sweeten and ease society; when to the contrary it breedeth offence or incumbrance, it is worse than vain and unprofitable. From these instances we may collect when in other like cases it is unseasonable, and therefore culpable. Farther,

5. To affect, admire, or highly to value this way of speaking, either absolutely in itself, or in comparison to the serious and plain way of speech, and thence to be drawn into an immoderate use thereof, is blameable. A man of ripe age and sound judgment, for refreshment to himself, or in complaisance to others, may sometimes condescend to play in this or in any other harmless way: but to be fond of it, to prosecute it with a careful or painful eagerness, to doat and dwell on it, to reckon it a brave or a fine thing, a singular matter of commendation, a transcendent accomplishment, anywise preferable to rational endowments, or comparable to the moral excellencies of our mind, (to solid knowlege, or sound wisdom, or truē virtue and goodness,) this is extremely childish, or brutish, and far below a man. What can be more absurd than to make a business of play, to be studious and laborious in toys, to make

* Adversus miseros inhumanus est jocus.—Quint.

a profession or drive a trade of impertinency?* what more plain nonsense can there be than to be earnest in jest, to be continual in divertisement, or constant in pastime; to make extravagance all our way, and sauce all our diet? Is not this plainly the life of a child, that is ever busy, yet never hath any thing to do? or the life of that mimical brute, which is always active in playing uncouth and unlucky tricks; which, could it speak, might surely pass well for a professed wit?

The proper work of man, the grand drift of human life, is to follow reason, (that noble spark kindled in us from heaven; that princely and powerful faculty, which is able to reach so lofty objects, and to achieve so mighty works;) not to sooth fancy, that brutish, shallow, and giddy power, able to perform nothing worthy much regard. 'We are not,' even Cicero could tell us, 'born for play and jesting; but for severity, and the study of graver and greater affairs.'† Yes, we were purposely designed, and fitly framed, to understand and contemplate, to affect and delight in, to undertake and pursue most noble and worthy things; to be employed in business considerably profitable to ourselves, and beneficial to others: we do therefore strangely debase ourselves, when we do strongly bend our minds to, or set our affections on such toys.

Especially to do so is unworthy of a Christian; that is of a person who is advanced to so high a rank, and so glorious relations; who hath so excellent objects of his mind and affections presented before him, and so excellent rewards for his care and pains proposed to him; who is engaged in affairs of so worthy nature, and so immense consequence: for him to be zealous about quibbles, for him to be ravished with puny conceits and expressions, it is a wondrous oversight, and an enormous indecency.

He indeed that prefers any faculty to reason, disclaims the privilege of being a man, and understands not the worth of his own nature; he that prizes any quality beyond virtue and

* Σπουδάζειν καὶ πονεῖν παιδιᾶς χάριν, ἠλίθιον φαίνεται, καὶ λίαν παιδικόν.—Arist. Eth. x. 6.

† Neque enim ita generati a natura sumus, ut ad ludum jocumque facti videamur; sed ad severitatem potius, et ad quædam studia graviora atque majora.—Cic. Off. i.

goodness, renounces the title of a Christian, and knows not how to value the dignity of his profession. It is these two, reason and virtue, in conjunction, which produce all that is considerably good and great in the world. Fancy can do little; doeth never any thing well, except as directed and wielded by them. Do pretty conceits or humorous talk carry on any business, or perform any work? No; they are ineffectual and fruitless: often they disturb, but they never dispatch any thing with good success. It is simple reason, as dull and dry as it seemeth, which expediteth all the grand affairs, which accomplisheth all the mighty works that we see done in the world. In truth, therefore, as one diamond is worth numberless bits of glass; so one solid reason is worth innumerable fancies: one grain of true science and sound wisdom in real worth and use doth outweigh loads, if any loads can be, of freakish wit. To rate things otherwise doth argue great weakness of judgment and fondness of mind. So to conceit of this way signifieth a weak mind; and much to delight therein rendereth it so: nothing more debaseth the spirit of a man, or more rendereth it light and trifling.*

Hence if we must be venting pleasant conceits, we should do it 'as if we did it not,' carelessly and unconcernedly; not standing on it, or valuing ourselves for it: we should do it with measure and moderation; not giving up ourselves thereto, so as to mind it, or delight in it more than in any other thing: we should not be so intent on it as to become remiss in affairs more proper or needful for us; so as to nauseate serious business, or disrelish the more worthy entertainments of our minds. This is the great danger of it, which we daily see men to incur; they are so bewitched with a humor of being witty themselves, or of

* Ὡς μὴ συμβαίνειν κατὰ ταυτὴν ψυχῆς νῆψιν. καὶ εὐτραπελίας διάχυσιν.—Bas. Const. Mon. 12.

Πολλοὺς συμβαίνει τοὺς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀσχολουμένους, τοῦ ὀρθοῦ λόγου διαμαρτάνειν, τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς γελοῖα μὲν διαχεομένης, καὶ τὸ τῆς φρονήσεως σύννουν καὶ πεπυκνωμένον καταλυούσης.—Ibid.

Jocorum frequens usus omne animis pondus, omnemque vim eripiet.—Sen. de Tranq. c. xv.

Ἡ εὐτραπελία μαλακὴν ποιεῖ τὴν ψυχὴν, ῥᾳθυμὸν, ἀναπεπτωκυῖαν.—Chrys. in Eph. 17.

hearkening to the fancies of others, that it is this only which they can like or savor, which they can endure to think or talk of. It is a great pity, that men who would seem to have so much wit, should so little undertand themselves. But farther,

6. Vain-glorious ostentation this way is very blameable. All ambition, all vanity, all conceitedness, on whatever ground they are founded, are absolutely unreasonable and silly: but yet those, being grounded on some real ability, or some useful skill, are wise and manly in comparison to this, which standeth on a foundation so manifestly slight and weak. The old philosophers by a severe father* were called *animalia gloriæ*, 'animals of glory;' and by a satirical poet they were termed 'bladders of vanity:' but they at least did catch at praise from praiseworthy knowlege; they were puffed up with a wind which blowed some good to mankind; they sought glory from that which deserved glory, if they had not sought it; it was a substantial and solid credit which they did affect, resulting from successful enterprises of strong reason and stout industry: but these *animalcula gloriæ*, these flies, these insects of glory, these, not bladders, but bubbles of vanity, would be admired and praised for that which is nowise admirable or laudable; for the casual hits and emergencies of roving fancy; for stumbling on an odd conceit or phrase, which signifieth nothing, and is as superficial as the smile, as hollow as the noise it causeth. Nothing certainly in nature is more ridiculous than a self-conceited wit, who deemeth himself somebody, and greatly pretendeth to commendation from so pitiful and worthless a thing as a knack of trifling.

7. Lastly, it is our duty never so far to engage ourselves in this way, as thereby to lose or to impair that habitual seriousness, modesty, and sobriety of mind, that steady composedness, gravity and constancy of demeanour, which become Christians. We should continually keep our minds intent on our 'high calling,' and grand interest; ever well tuned, and ready for the performance of holy devotions, and the practice of most serious duties with earnest attention and fervent affection: wherefore we should never suffer them to be dissolved into levity, or disordered into a wanton frame, indisposing us for

* Tertul.

religious thoughts and actions. We ought always in our behavior to maintain not only τὸ πρέπον, a fitting decency, but also τὸ σεμνὸν, a stately gravity, a kind of venerable majesty, suitable to that high rank which we bear of God's friends and children; adorning our holy profession, and guarding us from all impressions of sinful vanity. Wherefore we should not let ourselves be transported into any excessive pitch of lightness, inconsistent with, or prejudicial to, our Christian state and business. Gravity and modesty are the fences of piety, which being once slighted, sin will easily attempt and encroach on us. So the old Spanish gentleman may be interpreted to have been wise, who, when his son on a voyage to the Indies took his leave of him, gave him this odd advice; 'My son, in the first place keep thy gravity, in the next place fear God:' intimating that a man must first be serious before he can be pious.

To conclude, as we need not be demure, so must we not be impudent; as we should not be sour, so ought we not to be fond; as we may be free, so we should not be vain; as we may well stoop to friendly complaisance, so we should take heed of falling into contemptible levity. If without wronging others, or derogating from ourselves, we can be facetious; if we can use our wits in jesting innocently and conveniently; we may sometimes do it: but let us, in compliance with St. Paul's direction, beware of 'foolish talking and jesting, which are not convenient.'

'Now the God of grace and peace make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.' Amen.

SUMMARY OF SERMON XV.

JAMES, CHAP. V.—VERSE 12.

ST. JAMES does not in this text mean universally to interdict the use of oaths, which are in some cases lawful and expedient, nay even connected with our duty; but that swearing which our Lord expressly prohibited to his disciples, which is, needless and heedless swearing in ordinary conversation; a practice then frequent both among Jews and Gentiles, and which, to the shame of the present age, is in fashion also among Christians. From such a practice the Apostle dehorts us in terms denoting his great anxiety, and implying the matter to be of the highest importance. Some considerations on this head proposed to us.

I. The nature of an oath, and what we do when we venture to swear. It is, as expressed in the Decalogue, *an assuming the name of our God,* to countenance and confirm what we say. It is an invocation of God as a faithful witness of the truth of our words or the sincerity of our meaning. It is an appeal to him as an upright judge. It is a formal engagement of him to be the avenger of the violation of our oath. It is *a binding of our souls* solemnly to answer before God, and to undergo the issue of his judgment about what we affirm or undertake.

Hence we may collect that swearing requires great modesty and composedness of spirit; very serious consideration, that we be not rude with God, in taking up his name and prostituting it to vile or mean uses; that we do not abuse or debase his authority, &c. for we should reflect and consider what a presumption it is, without due regard and reverence to lay hold on

God's name; how grievously indecent it is at every turn to summon our Maker to second our giddy passions; what a wildness it is to dally with that judgment on which the eternal doom of all creatures depends; how prodigious a madness it is, without any constraint or needful cause to incur so horrible a danger, and to defy that vengeance which can thrust us down to endless woe. Even a heathen philosopher, considering the nature of an oath, did conclude the unlawfulness of it on slight occasions.

II. We may consider that swearing, agreeably to its nature and tendency, is represented in holy Scripture as a special part of religious worship; in the due performance of which we avow God for the governor of the world, piously acknowleging his principal attributes and special prerogatives: it also intimates a pious trust and confidence in him. God in goodness to such ends has pleased to lend us his great name; and in many exigences he exacts this practice from us, as an instance of our religious confidence in him, and as a service conducive to his glory: this therefore, like all other acts of devotion, should never be performed without serious consideration and lowly reverence. If we do presume to offer this service, we should do it in the manner appointed by God himself; the cause of it must be very needful or expedient, the design honest and useful; otherwise we desecrate swearing, and are guilty of profaning a most sacred ordinance.

III. We may consider that the swearing prohibited is very noxious to human society.

The great prop of society is conscience, or a sense of duty towards God, obliging us to perform what is right and equal, quickened by hope of rewards and fear of punishments from him; without which principle no worldly consideration can hold men fast. Instances given in which, for the public interest, it is requisite that the highest obligations possible should be laid on the consciences of men: and such are those of oaths.

To these purposes therefore they have ever been applied; by them nations have ratified leagues, princes have bound their subjects to obedience, and generals have engaged their soldiers to bear hardships and dangers; by them the nuptial league has been confirmed, and on them the decision of the most important causes has depended. The best men could scarcely ever trust the best without this obligation. Instances quoted from Scripture: these declare that there is no security which men can yield comparable to that of an oath; wherefore human society will be extremely wronged by dissolving or slackening these most sacred bonds of conscience, and consequently by their common and careless use: for the detriments accruing to the public from this abuse every vain swearer is responsible; nor will he ever be able to make reparation for them.

IV. Let us consider that rash and vain swearing is very apt to bring the practiser of it into the most horrible sin of perjury. He that swears at random, as passion moves or fancy prompts, or the tempter suggests, will often assert that which is false, or promise that which is impossible.

V. Such swearing commonly will induce a man to bind himself by oath to unlawful practices: instances of Saul and Herod.

VI. It will also frequently engage a man in undertakings very inconvenient and detrimental to himself; for a man is bound to *perform his vows to the Lord*, whatever damage they may cause to himself, if they be not unlawful: this confirmed by Scripture.

VII. Swearing is a sin of all others peculiarly clamorous, and provocative of divine judgment. God is bound in honor to vindicate his name from the abuse, his authority from the contempt, his holy ordinance from the profanation which it infers.

VIII. Passing over the special laws against it, the mischievous consequences of it, and the sore punishments ap-

pointed to it, we may consider that to common sense vain swearing is a practice very ill becoming any sober, worthy, honest person, especially a Christian : this point enlarged on, and enforced by quotations from profane and sacred writers.

IX. The practice of swearing greatly disparages him that uses it, and derogates from his credit, inasmuch as it signifies that he does not confide in his own reputation ; by it he authorises others to distrust him ; it renders what he says to be in reason suspicious, as discovering him to be void of conscience and discretion, &c.

X. To excuse these faults, the swearer will be forced to confess that his oaths are no more than waste and insignificant words ; deprecating the being taken for serious, or to be understood that he means any thing by them.

XI. But farther, on higher accounts this is a very uncivil and unmannerly practice : some vain persons take it for a genteel and graceful accomplishment ; but in truth there is no practice more crossing the genuine nature of gentility, or misbecoming persons well born and well bred : this topic enlarged on.

XII. Moreover the words of our Lord, when he forbad this practice, suggest another consideration against it deducible from the causes and sources of it : *let your communication*, says he, *be yea, yea ; nay, nay ; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.* Consult experience then, and observe whence it proceeds : sometimes from exorbitant heats of spirit and unbridled passion ; sometimes from arrogant conceit and a tyrannical humor ; sometimes from wantonness and levity of mind ; sometimes from stupid inadvertency or heedless precipitancy ; sometimes from profane boldness, or from apish imitation ; but always from a great defect of conscience, of reverence to God, and of love to goodness.

XIII. Farther, this offence may be aggravated by considering that it hath no strong temptation alluring to it ; that it

gratifies no sense, yields no profit, procures no honor: the vain swearer has not the common plea of human infirmity to excuse him.

XIV. Let us consider that, as we ourselves with all our members and powers were chiefly designed and made to glorify our Maker, which is our greatest privilege, so our tongue and speaking faculty were given us to declare our admiration and reverence of him, exhibit our love and gratitude towards him, to profess our trust in him, to celebrate his praises and avow his benefits: wherefore to apply this to any impious discourse, and to profane his holy name, is an unnatural abuse of it, and horrid ingratitude towards him. Likewise a secondary and worthy use of speech is, to promote the good of our neighbor, according to the precept of the Apostle, Eph. iv. 29. but the practice of vain swearing serves to corrupt him, and instil into him a contempt of religion.

XV. Lastly, we should consider two things; first, that our blessed Saviour, who did and suffered so much for us, and who said, *if ye love me, keep my commandments*, thus positively hath enjoined; *But I say unto you, swear not at all:* secondly, we should consider well the reason with which St. James enforces the point, and the sting in the close of the text; *but above all things, my brethren, swear not;—lest ye fall into condemnation.*

SERMON XV.

AGAINST RASH AND VAIN SWEARING.

JAMES, CHAP. V.—VERSE 12.

But above all things, my brethren, swear not.

Among other precepts of good life (directing the practice of virtue and abstinence from sin) St. James doth insert this about swearing, couched in expression denoting his great earnestness, and apt to excite our special attention. Therein he doth not mean universally to interdict the use of oaths; (for that in some cases is not only lawful, but very expedient, yea needful, and required from us as a duty;) but that swearing which our Lord had expressly prohibited to his disciples, and which thence, questionless, the 'brethren' to whom St. James did write did well understand themselves obliged to forbear, having learnt so in the first catechisms of Christian institution; that is, needless and heedless swearing in ordinary conversation: a practice then frequented in the world, both among Jews and Gentiles; the which also, to the shame of our age, is now so much in fashion, and with some men in vogue; the invoking God's name, appealing to his testimony, and provoking his judgment, on any slight occasion, in common talk, with vain incogitancy, or profane boldness. From such practice the holy Apostle dehorteth in terms importing his great concernedness, and implying the matter to be of highest importance: for, πρὸ πάντων, saith he, 'before all things, my brethren, do not swear;' as if he did apprehend this sin of all other to be one of the most heinous and pernicious. Could he have said more? would he have said so much, if he had not conceived the matter to be of exceeding

weight and consequence? And that it is so I mean now, by God's help, to show you, by proposing some considerations, whereby the heinous wickedness, together with the monstrous folly, of such rash and vain swearing will appear; the which being laid to heart will, I hope, effectually dissuade and deter from it.

I. Let us consider the nature of an oath, and what we do when we adventure to swear.

It is (as it is phrased in the Decalogue, and otherwhere in holy Scripture) an 'assuming the name of our God,' and applying it to our purpose, to countenance and confirm what we say.*

It is an invocation of God as a most faithful witness, concerning the truth of our words, or the sincerity of our meaning.

It is an appeal to God as a most upright Judge, whether we do prevaricate in asserting what we do not believe true, or in promising what we are not firmly resolved to perform.

It is a formal engagement of God to be the Avenger of our trespassing in violation of truth or faith.

It is a 'binding our souls'† with a most strict and solemn obligation, to answer before God, and to undergo the issue of his judgment about what we affirm or undertake.

Such an oath is represented to us in holy Scripture.

Whence we may collect that swearing doth require great modesty and composedness of spirit, very serious consideration and solicitous care that we be not rude and saucy with God, 'in taking up his name,' and prostituting it to vile or mean uses; that we do not abuse or debase his authority, by citing it to aver falsehoods or impertinences; that we do not slight his venerable justice, by rashly provoking it against us; that we do not precipitantly throw our souls into most dangerous snares and intricacies.

For, let us reflect and consider: what a presumption is it without due regard and reverence to lay hold on God's name; with unhallowed breath to vent and toss that great and glo-

* Plurima firmantur jurejurando——diis immortalibus interpositis tum judicibus, tum testibus.—Cic. de Leg. ii. p. 326.

† Num. xxx. 2. Πᾶς ὅρκος εἰς κατάραν τελευτᾷ τῆς ἐπιορκίας.—Plut. in Capit. Rom. p. 491.

rious, that most holy, that reverend, that fearful and terrible name of the Lord our God, the great Creator, the mighty Sovereign, the dreadful Judge of all the world; that name which all heaven with profoundest submission doth adore, which the angelical powers, the brightest and purest seraphim, without 'hiding their faces,' and reverential horror, cannot utter or hear; the very thought whereof should strike awe through our hearts, the mention whereof would make any sober man to tremble: πῶς γὰρ οὐκ ἄτοπον,' for how,' saith St. Chrysostom,* 'is it not absurd that a servant should not dare to call his master by name, or bluntly and ordinarily to mention him; yet that we slightly and contemptuously should in our mouth toss about the Lord of angels?'

'How is it not absurd, if we have a garment better than the rest, that we forbear to use it continually; but in the most slight and common way do wear the name of God?'

How grievous indecency is it, at every turn to summon our Maker, and call down Almighty God from heaven to attend our leisure, to vouch our idle prattle, to second our giddy passions, to concern his truth, his justice, his power in our trivial affairs?

What a wildness is it to dally with that judgment on which the eternal doom of all creatures dependeth, at which 'the pillars of heaven are astonished,' which hurled down legions of angels from the top of heaven and happiness into the bottomless dungeon; the which, as grievous sinners, of all things we have most reason to dread; and about which no sober man can otherwise think than did that great king, the holy psalmist, who said, 'My flesh trembleth for thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments?'

How prodigious a madness is it, without any constraint or needful cause to incur so horrible danger, to rush on a curse; to defy that vengeance, the least touch or breath whereof can dash us to nothing, or thrust us down into extreme and endless woe?

Who can express the wretchedness of that folly which so entangleth us with inextricable knots, and inchaineth our souls so rashly with desperate obligations?

* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ξ. p. 514.

Wherefore he that would but a little mind what he doeth when he dareth to swear, what it is to meddle with the adorable name, the venerable testimony, the formidable judgment, the terrible vengeance of the divine Majesty, into what a case he putteth himself, how extreme hazard he runneth thereby, would assuredly have little heart to swear, without greatest reason and most urgent need: hardly without trembling would he undertake the most necessary and solemn oath; much cause would he see *σέβεσθαι ὅρκον*, to adore, to fear an oath: which to do the divine preacher maketh the character of a good man; 'As,' saith he, 'is the good, so is the sinner, and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.'

In fine, even a heathen philosopher, considering the nature of an oath, did conclude the unlawfulness thereof in such cases. For, 'seeing,' saith he, 'an oath doth call God for witness, and proposeth him for umpire and voucher of the things it saith; therefore to induce God so on occasion of human affairs, or, which is all one, on small and slight accounts, doth imply contempt of him: wherefore we ought wholly to shun swearing, except on occasions of highest necessity.'*

II. We may consider that swearing (agreeably to its nature, or natural aptitude and tendency) is represented in holy Scripture as a special part of religious worship, or devotion toward God; in the due performance whereof we do avow him for the true God and Governor of the world: we piously do acknowlege his principal attributes and special prerogatives; (his omnipresence and omniscience, extending itself to our most inward thoughts, our secretest purposes, our closest retirements; his watchful providence over all our actions, affairs, and concerns; his faithful goodness in favoring truth and protecting right; his exact justice, in patronising sincerity, and chastising perfidiousness;) his being supreme Lord over all persons, and Judge paramount in all causes; his readiness in our need, on our humble imploration and reference, to undertake the arbitration of matters controverted, and the care of administering justice, for

* *Ὁ γὰρ ὅρκος μάρτυρα τὸν Θεὸν καλεῖ, καὶ μεσίτην αὐτὸν καὶ ἐγγυητὴν ἐφ' οἷς λέγει προῖσχεται. τὸ γοῦν ἐπὶ ἀνθρωπίνοις πράγμασι (ταυτὸν δὲ εἰπεῖν μικροῖς καὶ εὐτελέσι) τὸν Θεὸν παράγειν, καταφρόνησίν τινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ὑπογράφει· διὸ χρὴ παραιτεῖσθαι τὸν ὅρκον*, &c.—Simpl. in Epict. cap. xliv.

the maintenance of truth and right, of loyalty and fidelity, of order and peace among men. Swearing doth also intimate a pious trust and confidence in God; as Aristotle observeth.*

Such things a serious oath doth imply, to such purposes swearing naturally serveth; and therefore to signify or effectuate them, divine institution hath devoted it.

God in goodness to such ends hath pleased to lend us his great name; allowing us to cite him for a witness, to have recourse to his bar, to engage his justice and power, whenever the case deserveth and requireth it, or when we cannot by other means well assure the sincerity of our meaning, or secure the constancy of our resolutions.

Yea in such exigencies he doth exact this practice from us, as an instance of our religious confidence in him, and as a service conducible to his glory: for it is a precept in his law, of moral nature, and eternal obligation, 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and shalt swear by his name.' It is the character of a religious man to swear with due reverence and upright conscience. For, 'the king,' saith the psalmist, 'shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory; but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.' It is a distinctive mark of God's people, according to that of the prophet Jeremy, 'And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name—then shall they be built in the midst of my people.' It is predicted concerning the evangelical times, 'Unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear;' and, 'that he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself by the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth.'

As therefore all other acts of devotion, wherein immediate application is made to the Divine Majesty should never be performed without most hearty intention, most serious consideration, most lowly reverence; so neither should this grand one, wherein God is so nearly touched, and his chief attributes so much concerned: the which indeed doth involve both prayer

* Εὐσεβὲς τὸ θέλειν τοῖς θεοῖς ἐπιτρέπειν. It is a pious thing willingly to commend our case or controversy to God.—Arist. Rhet. i. 48.

and praise, doth require the most devotional acts of faith and fear.

We therefore should so perform it as not to incur that reproof: 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.'

When we seem most formally to avow God, to confess his omniscience, to confide in his justice, we should not really disregard him, and in effect signify that we do not think he doth know what we say, or mind what we do.

If we do presume to offer this service, we should do it in the manner appointed by himself, according to the conditions prescribed in the prophet, 'Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment and in righteousness:' 'in truth,' taking heed that our meaning be conformable to the sense of our words, and our words to the verity of things; 'in judgment,' having with careful deliberation examined and weighed that which we assert or promise; 'in righteousness,' being satisfied in conscience, that we do not therein infringe any rule of piety toward God, of equity toward men, of sobriety and discretion in regard to ourselves.

The cause of our swearing must be needful, or very expedient; the design of it must be honest and useful to considerable purposes; (tending to God's honor, our neighbor's benefit, our own welfare;) the matter of it should be not only just and lawful, but worthy and weighty; the manner ought to be grave and solemn, our mind being framed to earnest attention, and endued with pious affections suitable to the occasion.

Otherwise, if we do venture to swear, without due advice and care, without much respect and awe, on any slight or vain (not to say bad or unlawful) occasion; we then desecrate swearing, and are guilty of profaning a most sacred ordinance: the doing so doth imply base hypocrisy, or lewd mockery, or abominable wantonness and folly: in boldly invading, and vainly trifling with the most august duties of religion. Such swearing therefore is very dishonorable and injurious to God, very prejudicial to religion, very repugnant to piety.

III. We may consider that the swearing prohibited is very noxious to human society.

The great prop of society (which upholdeth the safety, peace,

and welfare thereof, in observing laws, dispensing justice, discharging trusts, keeping contracts, and holding good correspondence mutually) is conscience, or a sense of duty toward God, obliging to perform what is right and equal; quickened by hope of rewards, and fear of punishments from him: secluding which principle, no worldly consideration is strong enough to hold men fast; or can farther dispose many to do right, or observe faith, or hold peace, than appetite, or interest, or humor (things very slippery and uncertain) do sway them.

That men should live honestly, quietly, and comfortably together, it is needful that they should live under a sense of God's will, and in awe of the divine power, hoping to please God, and fearing to offend him, by their behavior respectively.

That justice should be administered between men, it is necessary that testimonies of fact be alleged; and that witnesses should apprehend themselves greatly obliged to discover the truth, according to their conscience, in dark and doubting cases.

That men should uprightly discharge offices serviceable to public good, it doth behove that they be firmly engaged to perform the trusts reposed in them.

That in affairs of very considerable importance, men should deal with one another with satisfaction of mind and mutual confidence, they must receive competent assurances concerning the integrity, fidelity, and constancy each of other.

That the safety of governors may be preserved, and the obedience due to them maintained secure from attempts to which they are liable, (by the treachery, levity, perverseness, timorousness, ambition, all such lusts and ill humors of men,) it is expedient that men should be tied with the strictest bands of allegiance.

That controversies emergent about the interests of men should be determined, and an end put to strife by peremptory and satisfactory means, is plainly necessary for common quiet.

Wherefore for the public interest and benefit of human society, it is requisite that the highest obligations possible should be laid on the consciences of men.

And such are those of oaths, engaging them to fidelity and

constancy in all such cases, out of regard to Almighty God, as the infallible patron of truth and right, the unavoidable chastiser of perfidiousness and improbity.

To such purposes therefore oaths have ever been applied, as the most effectual instruments of working them; not only among the followers of true and perfect religion, but even among all those who had any glimmering notions concerning a divine power and providence; who have deemed an oath the fastest tie of conscience, and held the violation of it for the most detestable impiety and iniquity. So that what Cicero saith of the Romans, that 'their ancestors had no band to constrain faith more strait than an oath,'* is true of all other nations; common reason not being able to devise any engagement more obliging than it; it being in the nature of things τελευταία πίστις, and ὀχυρώτατον ἀληθείας ἐνέχυρον, the utmost assurance, the last resort of human faith, the surest pledge that any man can yield of his trustiness. Hence ever in transactions of highest moment this hath been used to bind the faith of men.

Hereby nations have been wont to ratify leagues of peace and amity between each other: (which therefore the Greeks called ὅρκια.)

Hereby princes have obliged their subjects to loyalty: and it hath ever been the strongest argument to press that duty, which the preacher useth; 'I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.'

Hereby generals have engaged their soldiers to stick close to them, in bearing hardships and encountering dangers.

Hereby the nuptial league hath been confirmed; the solemnization whereof in temples before God is in effect a most sacred oath.

Hereon the decision of the greatest causes concerning the lives, estates, and reputations of men have depended; so that, as the Apostle saith, 'an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.'

Indeed such hath the need hereof been ever apprehended, that we may observe, in cases of great importance, no other

* Nullum enim vinculum ad adstringendam fidem jurejurando majores arctius esse voluerunt.—Cic. de Off. iii.

obligation hath been admitted for sufficient to bind the fidelity and constancy of the most credible persons; so that even the best men hardly could trust the best men without it. For instance,

When Abimelech would assure to himself the friendship of Abraham, although he knew him to be a very pious and righteous person, whose word might be as well taken as any man's, yet, for intire satisfaction, he thus spake to him: 'God is with thee in all that thou doest: now therefore swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me.'

Abraham, though he did much confide in the honesty of his servant Eliezer, having intrusted him with all his estate, yet in the affair concerning the marriage of his son, he could not but thus oblige him: 'Put,' saith he, 'I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh; and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites.'

Laban had good experience of Jacob's fidelity; yet that would not satisfy, but, 'the Lord,' said he, 'watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness between thee and me. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us.'

So did Jacob make Joseph swear, that he would 'bury him in Canaan:' and Joseph caused the children of Israel to swear, that they would 'translate his bones.' So did Jonathan cause his beloved friend David to swear, that he would 'show kindness to him, and to his house for ever.' The prudence of which course the event showeth, the total excision of Jonathan's family being thereby prevented; for, 'the king,' it is said, 'spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, because of the Lord's oath that was between them,'

These instances declare that there is no security which men can yield comparable to that of an oath; the obligation whereof no man wilfully can infringe, without renouncing the fear of God, and any pretence to his favor.

Wherefore human society will be extremely wronged and damnified by the dissolving or slackening these most sacred

bands of conscience, and consequently by their common and careless use; which soon will breed a contempt of them, and render them insignificant, either to bind the swearers, or to ground a trust on their oaths.

As by the rare and reverent use of oaths their dignity is upheld, and their obligation kept fast: so by the frequent and negligent application of them, by the prostituting them to every mean and toyish purpose, their respect will be quite lost, their strength will be loosed, they will prove unserviceable to public use.

If oaths generally become cheap and vile, what will that of allegiance signify? If men are wont to play with swearing anywhere, can we expect they should be serious and strict therein at the bar, or in the church? Will they regard God's testimony, or dread his judgment, in one place, or at one time, when every where on any, on no occasion they dare to confront and contemn them? Who then will be the more trusted for swearing? What satisfaction will any man have from it? The rifeness of this practice, as it is the sign, so it will be the cause of a general diffidence among men.

Incredible therefore is the mischief which this vain practice will bring in to the public; depriving princes of their best security, exposing the estates of private men to uncertainty, shaking all the confidence men can have in the faith of one another.

For which detriments accruing from this abuse to the public, every vain swearer is responsible; and he would do well to consider that he will never be able to make reparation for them. And the public is much concerned that this enormity be retrenched.

IV. Let us consider that rash and vain swearing is very apt often to bring the practiser of it into that most horrible sin of perjury. For 'false swearing,' as the Hebrew wise man saith, 'naturally springeth out of much swearing;'* and 'he,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'that sweareth continually, both willingly and unwillingly, both ignorantly and knowingly,

* Φύεται ἐκ πολυορκίας ψευδορκία.—Philo in Decal.

† Ὁ διηνεκῶς ὀμνὺς, &c.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ιδ'. p. 553.

Μὴ εἰς ὑπόκρισιν πέσητε, quidam legunt, Jac. v. 12. Vid. Grot.

both in earnest and in sport, being often transported by anger and many other things, will frequently forswear. It is confessed and manifest, that it is necessary for him that sweareth much, to be perjurious.' Ἀμήχανον γὰρ, ἀμήχανον, 'For,' saith he again, 'it is impossible, it is impossible for a mouth addicted to swearing, not frequently to forswear.' He that sweareth at random, as blind passion moveth, or wanton fancy prompteth, or the tempter suggesteth, often will hit on asserting that which is false, or promising that which is impossible: that want of conscience and of consideration which do suffer him to violate God's law in swearing, will betray him to the venting of lies, which backed with oaths become perjuries. If sometime what he sweareth doth happen to be true and performable, it doth not free him of guilt; it being his fortune, rather than his care or conscience, which keepeth him from perjury.

V. Such swearing commonly will induce a man to bind himself by oath to unlawful practices; and consequently will entangle him in a woful necessity, either of breaking his oath, or of doing worse, and committing wickedness: so that 'swearing,' as St. Chrysostom saith, 'hath this misery attending it, that both transgressed and observed it plagueth those who are guilty of it.'*

Of this perplexity the holy Scripture affordeth two notable instances: the one of Saul, forced to break his rash oaths; the other of Herod, being engaged thereby to commit a most horrid murder.

Had Saul observed his oaths, what injury had he done, what mischief had he produced, in slaughtering his most worthy and most innocent son, the prop and glory of his family, the bulwark of his country, and the grand instrument of salvation to it; in forcing the people to violate their cross oath, and for prevention of one, causing many perjuries? He was therefore fain to desist, and lie under the guilt of breaking his oaths.

And for Herod, the excellent father thus presseth the consideration of his case: 'Take,' saith he, 'I beseech you, the chopped-off head of St. John, and his warm blood yet trickling

* Τοῦτο τὸ δεινὸν ἔχει ὁ ὅρκος, ὅτι καὶ παραβαινόμενος καὶ φυλαττόμενος κολάζει τοὺς ἁλισκομένους.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ιδ'. p. 553.

down; each of you bear it home with you, and conceive that before your eyes you hear it uttering speech, and saying, Embrace the murderer of me, an oath. That which reproof did not, this an oath did do; that which the tyrant's wrath could not, this the necessity of keeping an oath did effect. For when the tyrant was reprehended publicly in the audience of all men, he bravely did bear the rebuke; but when he had cast himself into the necessity of oaths, then did he cut off that blessed head.'*

VI. Likewise the use of rash swearing will often engage a man in undertakings very inconvenient and detrimental to himself. A man is bound to 'perform his vows to the Lord,' whatever they be, whatever damage or trouble thence may accrue to him, if they be not unlawful. It is the law, 'that which is gone out of thy lips, thou shalt keep and perform.' It is the property of a good man, that 'he sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.' Wherefore it is the part of a sober man, to be well advised what he doth swear or vow religiously; that he do not put himself into the inextricable strait of committing great sin, or undergoing great inconvenience; that he do not rush into that snare of which the wise man speaketh, 'It is a snare to a man to devour that which is holy, (or to swallow a sacred obligation,) and after vows to make inquiry,'† seeking how he may disengage himself: the doing which is a folly offensive to God, as the preacher telleth us: 'When,' saith he, 'thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.' God will not admit our folly in vowing, as a plea or an excuse for non-performance; he will exact it from us both as a due debt, and as a proper punishment of our impious folly.

For instance, into what loss and mischief, what sorrow, what regret and repentance, did the unadvised vow of Jephtha throw him? the performance whereof, as St. Chrysostom remarketh, God did permit, and order to be commemorated with solemn lamentation, that all posterity might be admonished thereby, and deterred from such precipitant swearing.

* Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς τὴν κεφαλὴν Ἰωάννου λαβόντας—. Ἀνδρ. ιδ'. p. 552.

† Ὥσπερ τινὶ παγίδι κατεχόμενοι, καὶ δεσμοῖς ἀλύτοις συνδεδεμένοι, &c.—Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ξ'.

VII. Let us consider that swearing is a sin of all others peculiarly clamorous, and provocative of divine judgment. God is hardly so much concerned, or in a manner constrained, to punish any other sin as this. He is bound in honor and interest to vindicate his name from the abuse, his authority from the contempt, his holy ordinance from the profanation, which it doth infer. He is concerned to take care that his providence be not questioned, that the dread of his majesty be not voided, that all religion be not overthrown by the outrageous commission thereof with impunity.

It immediately toucheth his name, it expressly calleth on him to mind it, to judge it, to show himself in avenging it. He may seem deaf or unconcerned, if, being so called and provoked, he doth not declare himself.

There is understood to be a kind of formal compact between him and mankind, obliging him to interpose, to take the matter into his cognisance, being specially addressed to him.

The bold swearer doth importune him to hear, doth rouse him to mark, doth brave him to judge and punish his wickedness.

Hence no wonder that 'the flying roll,' a quick and inevitable curse, doth surprise the swearer, and 'cut him off,' as it is in the prophet. No wonder that so many remarkable instances do occur in history, of signal vengeance inflicted on persons notably guilty of this crime. No wonder that a common practice thereof doth fetch down public judgments; and that, as the prophets of old did proclaim, 'because of swearing the land mourneth.'

VIII. Farther, (passing over the special laws against it, the mischievous consequences of it, the sore punishments appointed to it,) we may consider that to common sense vain swearing is a very unreasonable and ill-favored practice, greatly misbecoming any sober, worthy, or honest person; but especially most absurd and incongruous to a Christian.

For in ordinary conversation what needful or reasonable occasion can intervene of violating this command? If there come under discourse a matter of reason, which is evidently true and certain, then what need can there be of an oath to affirm it, it sufficing to expose it to light, or to propose the evidences for it?

If an obscure or doubtful point come to be debated, it will not bear an oath; it will be a strange madness to dare, a great folly to hope the persuading it thereby. What were more ridiculous than to swear the truth of a demonstrable theorem? What more vain than so to assert a disputable problem? Oaths, like wagers, are in such cases no arguments, except of silliness in the users of them.

If a matter of history be started, then if a man be taken for honest, his word will pass for attestation without farther assurance: but if his veracity or probity be doubted, his oath will not be relied on, especially when he doth obtrude it. For it was no less truly than acutely said by the old poet, Οὐκ ἄνδρος ὅρκοι πίστις, ἀλλ' ὅρκων ἀνήρ, 'The man doth not get credit from an oath, but an oath from the man:' and a greater author, 'An oath,' saith St. Chrysostom,* 'doth not make a man credible; but the testimony of his life, and the exactness of his conversation, and a good repute. Many often have burst with swearing, and persuaded no man: others only nodding have deserved more belief than those who have swore so mightily.' Wherefore oaths, as they are frivolous coming from a person of little worth or conscience, so they are superfluous in the mouth of an honest and worthy person; yea, as they do not increase the credit of the former, so they may impair that of the latter.

'A good man,' as Socrates did say, 'should apparently so demean himself, that his word may be deemed more credible than an oath;' the constant tenor of his practice vouching for it, and giving it such weight, that no asseveration can farther corroborate it.

He should τοῖς ἔργοις εὐορκεῖν, 'swear by his good deeds,' and exhibit βίον ἀξιόπιστον, 'a life deserving belief,' as Clemens Alexandrinus saith:† so that no man should desire more from him than his bare assertion; but willingly should yield him the privilege which the Athenians granted to Xenocrates, that he should testify without swearing.

He should be like the Essenes, of whom Josephus saith,

* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ξ'. p. 514.

† Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 524.

that every thing spoken by them was more valid than an oath; whence they declined swearing.

He should so much confide in his own veracity and fidelity, and so much stand on them, that he should not deign to offer any pledge for them, implying them to want confirmation.

He should, as St. Hierome saith, 'so love truth, that he should suppose himself to have sworn whatsoever he hath said;' and therefore should not be apt to heap another oath on his words.

On such accounts common reason directed even Pagan wise men wholly to interdict swearing in ordinary conversation, or about petty matters, as an irrational and immoral practice, unworthy of sober and discreet persons. 'Forbear swearing about any matter,' said Plato, cited by Clem. Alex. 'Avoid swearing if you can, wholly,' said Epictetus. 'For money swear by no god, though you swear truly,' said Isocrates. And divers the like precepts occur in other heathens; the mention whereof may well serve to strike shame into many loose and vain people, bearing the name of Christians.

Indeed, for a true and real Christian, this practice doth especially in a far higher degree misbecome him, on considerations peculiar to his high calling and holy profession.

Plutarch telleth us that among the Romans the Flamen of Jupiter was not permitted to swear: of which law among other reasons he assigneth this; 'Because it is not handsome, that he, to whom divine and greatest things are intrusted, should de distrusted about small matters.' The which reason may well be applied to excuse every Christian from it, who is a priest to the Most High God, and hath the most celestial and important matters concredited to him; in comparison to which all other matters are very mean and inconsiderable. The dignity of his rank should render his word *verbum honoris*, passable without any farther engagement. He hath opinions of things, he hath undertaken practices inconsistent with swearing. For he that firmly doth believe that God is ever present with him, an auditor and witness of all his discourse; he that is persuaded that a severe judgment shall pass on him, wherein he must 'give an account for every idle word' which slippeth from him, and wherein, among other offenders, assuredly liars will

be condemned to the burning lake; he that in a great sacrament (once most solemnly taken, and frequently renewed) hath engaged and sworn, together with all other divine commandments, to observe those which most expressly do charge him to be exactly just, faithful, and veracious in all his words and deeds; who therefore should be ready to say with David, 'I have sworn, and am steadfastly purposed to keep thy righteous judgments;' to him every word hath the force of an oath; every lie, every breach of promise, every violation of faith doth involve perjury: for him to swear is false heraldry, an impertinent accumulation of one oath on another: he of all men should disdain to allow that his words are not perfectly credible, that his promise is not secure, without being assured by an oath.

IX. Indeed the practice of swearing greatly disparageth him that useth it, and derogateth from his credit on divers accounts.

It signifieth, (if it signifieth any thing,) that he doth not confide in his own reputation, and judgeth his own bare word not to deserve credit: for why, if he taketh his word to be good, doth he back it with asseverations? why, if he deemeth his own honesty to bear proof, doth he cite heaven to warrant it?

'It is,' saith St. Basil, 'a very foul and silly thing for a man to accuse himself as unworthy of belief, and to proffer an oath for security.'

By so doing a man doth authorise others to distrust him: for it can be no wrong to distrust him, who doth not pretend to be a credible person, or that his saying alone may safely be taken; who, by suspecting that others are not satisfied with his simple assertion, implieth a reason known to himself for it.

It rendereth whatever he saith to be in reason suspicious, as discovering him void of conscience and discretion: for he that flatly against the rules of duty and reason will swear vainly, what can engage him to speak truly? He that is so loose in so clear and so considerable a point of obedience to God, how can he be supposed staunch in regard to any other? 'It being,' as Aristotle hath it, 'the part of the same men to do ill things, and not to regard forswearing.' It will at least constrain any man to suspect all his discourse of vanity and unadvisedness,

seeing he plainly hath no care to bridle his tongue from so gross an offence.

It is strange therefore that any man of honor or honesty should not scorn, by such a practice, to shake his own credit, or to detract from the validity of his word; which should stand firm on itself, and not want any attestation to support it. It is a privilege of honorable persons, that they are excused from swearing, and that their *verbum honoris* passeth in lieu of an oath: is it not then strange that when others dispense with them, they should not dispense with themselves; but voluntarily degrade themselves, and with sin forfeit so noble a privilege?

X. To excuse these faults, the swearer will be forced to confess that his oaths are no more than waste and insignificant words; deprecating being taken for serious, or to be understood that he meaneth any thing by them; but only that he useth them as expletive phrases, *πρὸς ἀναπλήρωσιν λόγου*, to plump his speech, and fill up sentences. But such pleas do no more than suggest other faults of swearing, and good arguments against it; its impertinence, its abuse of speech, its disgracing the practiser of it in point of judgment and capacity. For so it is, oaths as they commonly pass are mere excrescences of speech, which do nothing but incumber and deform it; they so embellish discourse, as a wen or a scab do beautify a face, as a patch or a spot do adorn a garment.

To what purpose, I pray, is God's name hooked and haled into our idle talk? why should we so often mention him, when we do not mean any thing about him? would it not, into every sentence to foist a dog or a horse, (to intrude Turkish, or any barbarous gibberish,) be altogether as proper and pertinent?

What do these superfluities signify, but that the venter of them doth little skill the use of speech, or the rule of conversation, but meaneth to sputter and prate any thing without judgment or wit; that his invention is very barren, his fancy beggarly, craving the aid of any stuff to relieve it? One would think a man of sense should grutch to lend his ear, or incline his attention to such motley ragged discourse; that without nauseating he scarce should indure to observe men lavishing

time, and squandering their breath so frivolously. It is an affront to good company to pester it with such talk.

XI. But farther, on higher accounts this is a very uncivil and unmannerly practice.

Some vain persons take it for a genteel and graceful thing, a special accomplishment, a mark of fine breeding, a point of high gallantry: for who, forsooth, is the brave spark, the complete gentleman, the man of conversation and address, but he that hath the skill and confidence (O heavens! how mean a skill! how mad a confidence!) to lard every sentence with an oath or a curse; making bold at every turn to salute his Maker, or to summon him in attestation of his tattle; not to say, calling and challenging the Almighty to damn and destroy him? Such a conceit, I say, too many have of swearing, because a custom thereof, together with divers other fond and base qualities, hath prevailed among some people bearing the name and garb of gentlemen.

But in truth there is no practice more crossing the genuine nature of genteelness, or misbecoming persons well born and well bred; who should excel the rude vulgar in goodness, in courtesy, in nobleness of heart, in unwillingness to offend, and readiness to oblige those with whom they converse, in steady composedness of mind and manners, in disdaining to say or do any unworthy, any unhandsome things.

For this practice is not only a gross rudeness toward the main body of men, who justly reverence the name of God, and detest such an abuse thereof: not only, farther, an insolent defiance of the common profession, the religion, the law of our country, which disalloweth and condemneth it; but it is very odious and offensive to any particular society or company, at least wherein there is any sober person, any who retaineth a sense of goodness, or is anywise concerned for God's honor; for to any such person no language can be more disgustful; nothing can more grate his ears, or fret his heart, than to hear the sovereign object of his love and esteem so mocked and slighted; to see the law of his prince so disloyally infringed, so contemptuously trampled on; to find his best friend and benefactor so outrageously abused. To give him the lie were a compliment,

to spit in his face were an obligation, in comparison to this usage.

Wherefore it is a wonder that any person of rank, any that hath in him a spark of ingenuity, or doth at all pretend to good manners, should find in his heart or deign to comply with so scurvy a fashion; a fashion much more befitting the scum of the people than the flower of the gentry; yea rather, much below any men endued with a scrap of reason, or a grain of goodness. Would we bethink ourselves, modest, sober, and pertinent discourse would appear far more generous and masculine, than such mad hectoring the Almighty, such boisterous insulting over the received laws and general notions of mankind, such ruffianly swaggering against sobriety and goodness. If gentlemen would regard the virtues of their ancestors, the founders of their quality; that gallant courage, that solid wisdom, that noble courtesy, which advanced their families, and severed them from the vulgar; this degenerate wantonness and sordidness of language would return to the dunghill, or rather, which God grant, be quite banished from the world; the vulgar following their example.

XII. Farther, the words of our Lord, when he forbad this practice, do suggest another consideration against it, deducible from the causes and sources of it; from whence it cometh that men are so inclined or addicted thereto; 'Let,' saith he, 'your communication be, yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.' The roots of it he assureth us are evil, and therefore the fruit cannot be good: it is no grape which groweth from thorns, or fig from thistles. Consult experience, and observe whence it doth proceed.

Sometimes it ariseth from exorbitant heats of spirit, or transports of unbridled passion. When a man is keenly peevish, or fiercely angry, or eagerly contentious, then he blustereth, and dischargeth his choler in most tragical strains; then he would fright the objects of his displeasure by the most violent expressions thereof. This is sometime alleged in excuse of rash swearing; 'I was provoked;' the swearer will say, 'I was in passion:' but it is strange that a bad cause should justify a bad effect; that one crime should warrant another; that what would spoil a good action should excuse a bad one.

Sometimes it proceedeth from arrogant conceit, and a tyrannical humor; when a man fondly admireth his own opinion, and affecting to impose it on others, is thence moved to thwack it on with lusty asseverations.

Sometimes it issueth from wantonness and levity of mind, disposing a man to sport with any thing, how serious, how grave, how sacred and venerable soever.

Sometimes its rise is from stupid inadvertency, or heady precipitancy; when the man doth not heed what he saith, or consider the nature and consequence of his words, but snatcheth any expression which cometh next, or which his roving fancy doth offer; for want of that caution of the psalmist, 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.'

Sometimes (alas! how often in this miserable age!) it doth spring from profane boldness; when men design to put affronts on religion, and to display their scorn and spite against conscience; affecting the reputation of stout blades, of gallant hectors, of resolute giants, who dare do any thing, who are not afraid to defy Heaven, and brave God Almighty himself.

Sometimes it is derived from apish imitation, or a humor to comply with a fashion current among vain and dissolute persons.

It always doth come from a great defect of conscience, of reverence to God, of love to goodness, of discretion and sober regard to the welfare of a man's soul.

From such evidently vicious and unworthy sources it proceedeth, and therefore must needs be very culpable. No good, no wise man can like actions drawn from such principles. Farther,

XIII. This offence may be particularly aggravated by considering that it hath no strong temptation alluring to it; that it yieldeth no sensible advantage; that it most easily may be avoided or corrected.

'Every sin,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'hath not the same punishment; but those things which may easily be reformed do bring on us greater punishment:' and what can be more

easy than to reform this fault? 'Tell me,' saith he, 'what difficulty, what sweat, what art, what hazard, what more doth it require, beside a little care,' to abstain wholly from it? It is but willing, or resolving on it, and it is instantly done: for there is not any natural inclination disposing to it, any strong appetite to detain us under its power.

It gratifieth no sense, it yieldeth no profit, it procureth no honor; for the sound of it is not very melodious, and no man surely did ever get an estate by it, or was preferred to dignity for it. It rather to any good ear maketh a horrid and jarring noise; it rather with the best part of the world produceth displeasure, damage, and disgrace. What therefore beside monstrous vanity, and unaccountable perverseness, should hold men so devoted thereto?

Surely of all dealers in sin the swearer is palpably the silliest, and maketh the worst bargains for himself; for he sinneth gratis, and, like those in the prophet, 'selleth his soul for nothing.' An epicure hath some reason to allege, an extortioner is a man of wisdom, and acteth prudently in comparison to him; for they enjoy some pleasure, or acquire some gain here, in lieu of their salvation hereafter: but this fondling offendeth Heaven, and abandoneth happiness, he knoweth not why or for what. He hath not so much as the common plea of human infirmity to excuse him; he can hardly say that he was tempted thereto by any bait.

A fantastic humor possesseth him of spurning at piety and soberness; he inconsiderately followeth a herd of wild fops; he affecteth to play the ape. What more than this can he say for himself?

XIV. Finally, let us consider that, as we ourselves, with all our members and powers, were chiefly designed and framed to glorify our Maker; (the which to do is indeed the greatest perfection and noblest privilege of our nature;) so our tongue and speaking faculty were given to us to declare our admiration and reverence of him, to exhibit our due love and gratitude toward him, to profess our trust and confidence in him, to celebrate his praises, to avow his benefits, to address our supplications to him, to maintain all kinds of devotional intercourse with him, to propagate our knowlege, fear, love, and obedience to

him, in all such ways to promote his honor and service. This is the most proper, worthy, and due use of our tongue, for which it was created, to which it is dedicated, from whence it becometh, as it is so often styled, our glory, and the best member that we have; that whereby we excel all creatures here below, and whereby we are no less discriminated from them than by our reason; that whereby we consort with the blessed angels above in the distinct utterance of praise, and communication of glory to our Creator. Wherefore applying this to any impious discourse, with this to profane God's blessed name, with this to violate his holy commands, with this to unhallow his sacred ordinance, with this to offer dishonor and indignity to him, is a most unnatural abuse, a horrid ingratitude toward him.

It is that indeed whereby we render this noble organ incapable of any good use. For how (as the excellent Father* doth often urge) can we pray to God for mercies, or praise God for his benefits, or heartily confess our sins, or cheerfully partake of the holy mysteries, with a mouth defiled by impious oaths, with a heart guilty of so heinous disobedience?

Likewise, whereas a secondary, very worthy use of our speech is, to promote the good of our neighbor, and especially to edify him in piety, according to that wholesome precept of the Apostle, 'Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers;' the practice of swearing is an abuse very contrary to that good purpose, serving to corrupt our neighbor, and to instil into him a contempt of religion; or, however, grievously to scandalise him.

XV. I shall add but two words more. One is, that we would seriously consider that our blessed Saviour, who loved us so dearly, who did and suffered so much for us, who redeemed us by his blood, who said unto us, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments,' he thus positively hath enjoined, 'But I say unto you, Swear not at all:' and how then can we find in our heart directly to thwart his word?

The other is, that we would lay to heart the reason whereby

* Chrys. Ἀνδρ. ιδ'. p. 559. ια'. p. 538.

St. James doth inforce the point, and the sting in the close of our text, wherewith I conclude; 'But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay nay, lest ye fall into condemnation,' or, 'lest ye fall under damnation.' From the which infinite mischief, and from all sin that may cause it, God in mercy deliver us through our blessed Redeemer Jesus, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

SUMMARY OF SERMON XVI.

TITUS, CHAP. III.—VERSE 2.

THE words of the text imply a double duty; one incumbent on teachers, another on the people who are to be instructed by them.

The teacher's duty will appear from reflecting on the words of the context, which govern these, and make them up an intire sentence: *put them in mind*, or, rub up their memory to do thus: we have here St. Paul's injunction to Titus, a bishop and pastor of the church; whence it is apparent that this is one of the principal duties that preachers are obliged to press on the people; and if it were requisite in St. Paul's time, it is now especially so: farther observations on this topic.

The import and extent of the duty, *not to reproach* or *speak evil of any man*, is first explained; and next inculcated by several inducements to the observance of it.

I. For explication, we may consider the object of it, *no man*; then the act itself which is prohibited, *to blaspheme*, that is, to reproach, to revile, or as we have it rendered, *to speak evil.*

No man. St. Paul questionless did especially mean hereby to hinder Christians at that time from reproaching the Jews and Pagans among whom they lived, wicked men, who did hate and persecute them; of whom therefore they had great provocation to speak ill: whence may be inferred that the object of this duty is very large, indeed universal and unlimited.

As for the act, *βλασφημεῖν*, *to blaspheme*, it is to vent words concerning any person which signify an ill opinion, hatred, or enmity in our minds towards him, which are apt to kindle in him

wrath and ill blood against us, or ill will toward him in others that hear us, which are productive of injury or mischief to him: synonymes of it that are used in Scripture quoted. The reason of things helps to explain these words, and to show why they are prohibited: because such harsh terms are needless; mild words serving as well to express the same things; because they are commonly unjust, loading men with greater blame than they can be proved to deserve; because they are uncharitable, and produce mischievous effects. This is in gross the meaning of the precept. But since there are some other precepts which seem to clash with it, some cases wherein we are allowed to use the harsher sort of terms, it may be requisite, for determining the limits of our duty, to declare such exceptions or restrictions.

1. First, then, we may observe that it may be allowable to persons, anywise concerned in the prosecution or administration of justice, to speak words which in private intercourse would be reproachful.

2. God's ministers in religious affairs, to whom the care of men's instruction and edification is committed, are empowered to inveigh against sin and vice, whoever consequentially may be touched thereby; yea, sometimes it is their duty sharply to rebuke particular persons for their correction and the edification of others. Directions of St. Paul to Timothy on this point. Instances of this in the old prophets, and in the Apostles.

3. Even private persons in due season, with discretion and temper, may reprove others, whom they observe to commit sin, or to follow bad courses, out of a charitable design, and with a hope to reclaim them. This was an office of charity imposed anciently on the Jews: much more does it lie on Christians.

4. Some vehemency or sharpness of speech may sometimes be used in defence of truth, and in attacking errors of bad consequence, especially when it concerns the interest of truth,

that the reputation and authority of its adversaries should be somewhat abated.

5. It may be excusable, on particular emergent occasions, with some heat of language to express dislike of notorious wickedness. Our Lord's speeches against the pharisees instanced; also those of St. Peter and St. Paul, against Simon Magus and Elymas; &c.

These sort of speeches, issuing from just indignation, and from persons eminent in authority and integrity, such as cannot be suspected of intemperate anger and ill will, are sometimes excusable, and even commendable. But it will be right to reflect on the cases when they appear so, and to remark some particulars about them.

First, we may observe that in all such cases all possible moderation, equity, and candor, are to be used; so that no ill speaking be practised beyond what is needful or convenient. Even in the prosecution of offences, the bounds of truth, humanity, and clemency are not to be transgressed: this may be learned from the law of Moses.

Secondly, ministers, in taxing sin and sinners, are to proceed with great caution, gentleness, and meekness; signifying a tender pity of their infirmities, charitable desires for their good, and the best hopes for them that may consist with reason; according to the apostolical rules quoted.

Thirdly, as for fraternal correction and reproof of faults, when it is just and expedient to use it, ordinarily the calmest and mildest way is most proper and likely to obtain good success; whereas rough handling is apt to obstruct the cure, and harsh speech renders advice odious.

Fourthly, in defence also of truth and maintenance of a good cause, commonly the fairest language is most proper and advantageous: a modest and friendly style suits truth, which thus propounded is more willingly hearkened to; but it is a preposterous method of instructing, of deciding controversies,

of begetting peace, to vex and anger those concerned by ill language.

Fifthly, as for the examples of extraordinary persons, which in some cases seem to authorise the practice of evil-speaking; we may consider that, as they had especial commission enabling them to do some things beyond ordinary rules, and had especial illumination to direct them, so the tenor of their life gave evidence that the glory of God, the good of men, and the necessity of the case, moved them to it: this topic enlarged on.

The cases of exception then are few, and to be cautiously admitted: for our clearer direction, in speaking about our neighbor, we must observe the following cautions.

1. We should never in severe terms inveigh against any man without reasonable warrant, or presuming on a good call and commission for the purpose.

2. We should never speak so of any man without apparent just cause: we must not reproach men for things innocent or indifferent, for not complying with our humor or interests.

3. We should not cast reproach on any man without some necessary reason: in that charity which covereth a multitude of sins, we are bound to extenuate and excuse the faults of our brethren, so far as truth and equity permit.

4. We should never speak ill of our neighbor beyond measure, be the cause never so just, the occasion never so necessary.

5. We should never speak ill of any man out of bad principles, or for bad ends; from no sudden anger, inveterate hatred, revengeful disposition, contempt, or envy; to compass any design of our own, to cherish any malignity or ill humor; neither out of wantonness nor out of negligence and inadvertency; in fine from no other principle but that of charity, and to no other intent but what is charitable.

II. So much for the explication of this precept: some inducements to the observance of it are now propounded.

1. Let us consider that nothing more than railing and reviling is opposite to the nature, and inconsistent with the tenor of our religion.

2. It is therefore often expressly condemned and prohibited as evil.

3. Against no practice are severer punishments denounced. St. Paul adjudges the railer to be banished from good society, 1 Cor. v. 11.; and from heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 10.

4. Such language is in its nature the symptom of a weak and distempered mind: a stream that cannot issue from a sweet spring.

5. This practice plainly signifies low spirit, ill-breeding, and bad manners, and is thence unbecoming to any wise, honest, or honorable person: all such have an aversion to it, and cannot entertain it with complacency.

6. He that uses this kind of speech, as he harms and troubles others, so does he create thereby great inconveniences and mischiefs to himself: this point enlarged on.

7. Hence with evidently good reason is he that uses such language called a fool; and he that abstaineth from it is commended as wise: Prov. xviii. 6. 7.

8. Lastly, we may consider that it is a grievous perversion of the design of speech, which so much distinguishes us above other creatures, to use it in defaming and disquieting our neighbor: far better were it that we could say nothing, than that we should speak ill. Conclusion.

SERMON XVI.

OF EVIL-SPEAKING IN GENERAL.

TITUS, CHAP. III.—VERSE 2.

—To speak evil of no man.

THESE words do imply a double duty; one incumbent on teachers, another on the people who are to be instructed by them.

The teacher's duty appeareth from reflecting on the words of the context, which govern these, and make them up an intire sentence; 'Put them in mind,' or, rub up their memory to do thus. It is St. Paul's injunction to Titus, a bishop and pastor of the church, that he should admonish the people committed to his care and instruction, as of other great duties, (of yielding obedience to magistrates, of behaving themselves peaceably, of practising meekness and equity toward all men, of being 'readily disposed to every good work,') so particularly of this, μηδένα βλασφημεῖν, 'to revile,' or 'speak evil of no man.'

Whence it is apparent that this is one of the principal duties that preachers are obliged to mind people of, and to press on them. And if this were needful then, when charity, kindled by such instructions and examples, was so lively; when Christians, by their sufferings, were so inured to meekness and patience; even every one, for the honor of his religion, and the safety of his person, was concerned in all respects to demean himself innocently and inoffensively; then is it now especially requisite, when (such engagements and restraints being taken

off, love being cooled, persecution being extinct, the tongue being set loose from all extraordinary curbs) the transgression of this duty is grown so prevalent and rife, that evil-speaking is almost as common as speaking, ordinary conversation extremely abounding therewith, that ministers should discharge their office in dehorting and dissuading from it.

Well indeed it were, if by their example of using mild and moderate discourse, of abstaining from virulent invectives, tauntings, and scoffings, good for little but to inflame anger, and infuse ill-will, they would lead men to good practice of this sort: for no examples can be so wholesome, or so mischievous to this purpose, as those which come down from the pulpit, the place of edification, backed with special authority and advantage.

However, it is to preachers a ground of assurance, and matter of satisfaction, that in pressing this duty they shall perform their duty: their text being not so much of their own choosing, as given them by St. Paul; they can surely scarce find a better to discourse on: it cannot be a matter of small moment or use, which this great master and guide so expressly directeth us to insist on. And to the observance of his precept, so far as concerneth me, I shall immediately apply myself.

It is then the duty of all Christian people, (to be taught, and pressed on them,) 'not to reproach,' or 'speak evil of any man.' The which duty, for your instruction, I shall first endeavor somewhat to explain, declaring its import and extent; then, for your farther edification, I shall inculcate it, proposing several inducements persuasive to the observance of it.

I. For explication, we may first consider the object of it, 'no man;' then the act itself, which is prohibited, 'to blaspheme,' that is, to reproach, to revile, or, as we have it rendered, 'to speak evil.'

'No man.' St. Paul questionless did especially mean hereby to hinder the Christians at that time from reproaching the Jews and the Pagans among whom they lived, men in their lives very wicked and corrupt, men in opinion extremely dissenting from them, men who greatly did hate, and cruelly did persecute them; of whom therefore they had mighty provocations

and temptations to speak ill; their judgment of the persons, and their resentment of injuries, making it difficult to abstain from doing so. Whence by a manifest analogy may be inferred, that the object of this duty is very large, indeed universal and unlimited: that we must forbear reproach not only against pious and virtuous persons, against persons of our own judgment or party, against those who never did harm or offend us, against our relations, our friends, our benefactors; in respect of whom there is no ground or temptation of ill-speaking; but even against the most unworthy and wicked persons, against those who most discoast in opinion and practice from us, against those who never did oblige us, yea those who have most disobliged us, even against our most bitter and spiteful enemies. There is no acception or excuse to be admitted from the quality, state, relation, or demeanor of men; the duty (according to the proper sense, or due qualifications and limits of the act) doth extend to all men: for, 'speak evil of no man.'

As for the act, it may be inquired what the word *βλασφημεῖν*, 'to blaspheme,' doth import. I answer, that it is to vent words concerning any person which do signify in us ill opinion, or contempt, anger, hatred, enmity conceived in our minds toward him; which are apt in him to kindle wrath, and breed ill blood toward us; which tend to beget in others that hear ill conceit, or ill-will toward him; which are much destructive of his reputation, prejudicial to his interests, productive of damage or mischief to him. It is otherwise in Scripture termed *λοιδορεῖν*, 'to rail' or 'revile,' (to use bitter and ignominious language;) *ὑβρίζειν*, 'to speak contumeliously;' *φέρειν βλάσφημον κρίσιν*, 'to bring railing accusation,' (or reproachful censure;) *καταλαλεῖν*, to use 'obloquy,' or 'obtrectation;' *καταρᾶσθαι*, 'to curse,' that is, to speak words importing that we do wish ill to a person.

Such is the language we are prohibited to use. To which purpose we may observe, that whereas in our conversation and commerce with men, there do frequently occur occasions to speak of men, and to men, words apparently disadvantageous to them expressing our dissent in opinion from them, or a dislike in us of their proceedings, we may do this in different

ways and terms; some of them gentle and moderate, signifying no ill mind or disaffection toward them: others harsh and sharp, arguing height of disdain, disgust, or despite, whereby we bid them defiance, and show that we mean to exasperate them. Thus, telling a man that we differ in judgment from him, or conceive him not to be in the right, and calling him a liar, a deceiver, a fool; saying that he doeth amiss, taketh a wrong course, transgresseth the rule, and calling him dishonest, unjust, wicked; (to omit more odious and provoking names, unbecoming this place, and not deserving our notice;) are several ways of expressing the same things: whereof the latter, in relating passages concerning our neighbor, or in debating cases with him, is prohibited: for thus the words reproaching, reviling, railing, cursing, and the like, do signify; and thus our Lord himself doth explain them, in his divine sermon, wherein he doth enact this law; 'Whosoever,' saith he, 'shall say to his brother, Raca,' (that is, vain man, or liar,) 'shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire;' that is, he rendereth himself liable to a strict account, and to severe condemnation before God, who useth contemptuous and contumelious expressions toward his neighbor, in proportion to the malignity of such expressions.

The reason of things also doth help to explain those words, and to show why they are prohibited: because those harsh terms are needless; mild words serving as well to express the same things: because they are commonly unjust, loading men with greater defect or blame than they can be proved to deserve, or their actions do import: (for every man that speaketh falsehood is not therefore a liar, every man that erreth is not thence a fool, every man that doeth amiss is not consequently dishonest or wicked; the secret intentions and the habitual dispositions of men not being always to be collected from their outward actions:) because they are uncharitable, signifying that we entertain the worst opinions of men, and make the worst construction of their doings, and are disposed to show them no favor or kindness: because also they produce mischievous effects, such as spring from the worst passions raised by them.

This in gross is the meaning of the precept. But since there are some other precepts seeming to clash with this; since there are cases wherein we are allowed to use the harsher sort of terms, there are great examples in appearance thwarting this rule; therefore it may be requisite for determining the limits of our duty, and distinguishing it from transgression, that such exceptions or restrictions should be somewhat declared.

1. First then, we may observe that it may be allowable to persons anywise concerned in the prosecution or administration of justice, to speak words which in private intercourse would be reproachful. A witness may impeach of crimes hurtful to justice, or public tranquillity; a judge may challenge, may rebuke, may condemn an offender in proper terms, (or forms of speech prescribed by law,) although most disgraceful and distasteful to the guilty: for it belongeth to the majesty of public justice to be bold, blunt, severe; little regarding the concerns or passions of particular persons, in comparison to the public welfare.

A testimony therefore or sentence against a criminal, which materially is a reproach, and morally would be such in a private mouth, is not yet formally so according to the intent of this rule. For practices of this kind, which serve the exigences of justice, are not to be interpreted as proceeding from anger, hatred, revenge, any bad passion or humor; but in way of needful discipline for God's service, and common benefit of men. It is not indeed so much the minister of justice, as God himself, our absolute Lord, as the Sovereign, God's representative, acting in the public behalf, as the commonwealth itself, who by his mouth do rebuke the obnoxious person.

2. God's ministers in religious affairs, to whom the care of men's instruction and edification is committed, are enabled to inveigh against sin and vice, whoever consequentially may be touched thereby; yea sometimes it is their duty with severity and sharpness to reprove particular persons, not only privately, but publicly, in order to their correction, and edification of others.

Thus St. Paul directeth Timothy; 'Them that sin (notoriously and scandalously he meaneth) rebuke before all, that

others may fear;' that is in a manner apt to make impression on the minds of the hearers, so as to scare them from like offences. And to Titus he writes, 'Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.' And, 'Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins,' saith the Lord to the prophet. Such are the charges and commissions laid on and granted to his messengers.

Thus may we observe that God's prophets of old, St. John the Baptist, our Lord himself, the holy Apostles did in terms most vehement and biting reprove the age in which they lived, and some particular persons in them. The prophets are full of declamations and invectives against the general corruption of their times, and against the particular manners of some persons in them. 'Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters!' 'They are all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men; and they bend their tongues like their bow for lies.' 'Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves; every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come before them.' 'The prophets prophecy falsely, and the priests rule by their means.' 'As troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way by consent, and commit lewdness.' Such is their style commonly. St. John the Baptist calleth the scribes and pharisees 'a generation of vipers.' Our Saviour speaketh of them in the same terms; calleth them an 'evil and adulterous generation,' 'serpents,' and 'children of vipers;' 'hypocrites,' 'painted sepulchres,' 'obscure graves,' (*μνημεῖα ἄδηλα,*) 'blind guides,' 'fools and blind,' 'children of the devil.' St. Paul likewise calleth the schismatical and heretical teachers, 'dogs,' 'false Apostles,' 'evil and deceitful workers,' 'men of corrupt minds,' 'reprobates and abominable.' With the like colors, do St. Peter, St. Jude, and other the Apostles, paint them. Which sort of speeches are to be supposed to proceed, not from private passion or design, but out of holy zeal for God's honor, and from earnest charity toward men, for to work their amendment and common edification. They were uttered also by special wisdom and peculiar order; from God's authority and in his name: so

that as God by them is said to preach, to entreat, to warn, and to exhort; so by them also he may be said to reprehend and reproach.

3. Even private persons in due season, with discretion and temper, may reprove others, whom they observe to commit sin, or follow bad courses, out of charitable design, and with hope to reclaim them. This was an office of charity imposed anciently even on the Jews: much more doth it lie on Christians, who are obliged more earnestly to tender the spiritual good of those who by the stricter and more holy bands of brotherhood are allied to them. 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother: thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin on him,' was a precept of the old law: and, *νουθετεῖν ἀτάκτους*, 'to admonish the disorderly,' is an evangelical rule. Such persons we are injoined to shun and decline: but first we must endeavor by sober advice and admonition to reclaim them; we must not thus reject them till they appear contumacious and incorrigible, refusing to hear us, or becoming deaf to reproof. This, although it necessarily doth include setting out their faults, and charging blame on them, (answerable to their offences,) is not the culpable reproach here meant, it being needful toward a wholesome effect, and proceeding from charitable intention.

4. Some vehemency (some smartness and sharpness) of speech may sometimes be used in defence of truth, and impugning errors of bad consequence: especially when it concerneth the interest of truth, that the reputation and authority of its adversaries should somewhat be abased or abated. If by a partial opinion or reverence toward them, however begotten in the minds of men, they strive to overbear or discountenance a good cause, their faults, so far as truth permitteth and need requireth, may be detected and displayed. For this cause particularly may we presume our Lord (otherwise so meek in his temper, and mild in his carriage toward all men) did characterise the Jewish scribes in such terms, that their authority (being then so prevalent with the people) might not prejudice the truth, and hinder the efficacy of his doctrine. This is part of that *ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ πίστει*, that duty of 'contending earnestly for the faith,'* which is incumbent on us.

* Jude 3.

5. It may be excusable on particular emergent occasions, with some heat of language to express dislike of notorious wickedness. As our Lord doth against the perverse incredulity and stupidity in the pharisees, their profane misconstruction of his words and actions, their malicious opposing truth, and obstructing his endeavors in God's service. As St. Peter did to Simon Magus, telling him, that he 'was in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.' As St. Paul to Elymas the sorcerer, when he 'withstood him, and desired to turn away the deputy, Sergius, from the faith.' 'O,' said he, stirred with a holy zeal and indignation, 'thou full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?' The same spirit, which enabled him to inflict a sore punishment on that wicked wretch, did prompt him to use that sharp language toward him; unquestionably deserved, and seasonably pronounced. As also, when the high priest commanded him illegally and unjustly to be misused, that speech from a mind justly sensible of such outrage broke forth, 'God shall smite thee, thou whited wall.' So, when St. Peter presumptuously would have dissuaded our Lord from compliance with God's will, in undergoing those crosses which were appointed to him by God's decree, our Lord calleth him Satan; Ὕπαγε, Σατανᾶ, 'Avaunt, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that are of men.'

These sort of speeches, issuing from just and honest indignation, are sometimes excusable, oftentimes commendable; especially when they come from persons eminent in authority, of notable integrity, endued with special measures of divine grace, of wisdom, of goodness; such as cannot be suspected of intemperate anger, of ill nature, of ill will, or ill design.

In such cases as are above mentioned, a sort of 'evil-speaking' about our neighbor may be allowable or excusable. But for fear of overdoing, great caution and temper is to be used; and we should never apply any such limitations as cloaks to palliate unjust or uncharitable dealing. Generally it is more advisable to suppress such eruptions of passion, than to vent it; for seldom passion hath not inordinate motions joined with it,

or tendeth to good ends. And however it will do well to reflect on those cases, and to remark some particulars about them.

First, we may observe, that in all these cases, all possible moderation, equity, and candor are to be used; so that no ill-speaking be practised beyond what is needful or convenient. Even in prosecution of offences, the bounds of truth, of equity, of humanity and clemency are not to be transgressed. A judge must not lay on the most criminal person more blame, or contumely, than the case will bear, or than serveth the designs of justice. However our neighbor doth incur the calamities of sin and of punishment, we must not be insolent or contemptuous toward him. So we may learn by that law of Moses, backed with a notable reason: 'and it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed; lest if he should exceed, and beat him above those stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.' Whence appears, that we should be careful of not vilifying an offender beyond measure. And how mildly governors should proceed in the administration of justice, the example of Joshua may teach us, who thus examineth Achan, the cause of so great mischief to the public: 'My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done, hide it not from me.' 'My son;' what compellation could be more benign and kind? 'I pray thee;' what language could be more courteous and gentle? 'Give glory to God, and make confession;' what words could be more inoffensively pertinent? And when he sentenced that great malefactor, the cause of so much mischief, this was all he said, 'Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord will trouble thee;' words void of contumely or insulting, containing only a close intimation of the cause, and a simple declaration of the event he was to undergo.

Secondly, likewise ministers, in the taxing sin and sinners, are to proceed with great discretion and caution, with much gentleness and meekness; signifying a tender pity of their infirmities, charitable desires of their good, the best opinion of them, and the best hopes for them, that may consist with any

reason; according to those apostolical rules: 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted:' and, 'we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves:' and more expressly, 'a servant of the Lord must not fight, but be gentle toward all, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.' Thus did St. Peter temper his reproof of Simon Magus with this wholesome and comfortable advice;' 'Repent therefore from this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.'

Thirdly, as for fraternal correption, and reproof of faults, when it is just and expedient to use it, ordinarily the calmest and mildest way is the most proper,* and most likely to obtain good success: it commonly doth in a more kindly manner convey the sense thereof into the heart,† and therein more powerfully worketh remorse, than the fierce and harsh way. Clearly to show a man his fault, with the reason proving it such, so that he becometh throughly convinced of it, is sufficient to breed in him regret, and to shame him before his own mind: to do more, (in way of aggravation, of insulting on him, of inveighing against him,) as it doth often not well consist with humanity, so it is seldom consonant to discretion, if we do, as we ought, seek his health and amendment.‡ Humanity requireth that when we undertake to reform our neighbor, we should take care not to deform him; (not to discourage or displease him more than is necessary;) when we would correct his manners, that we should also consider his modesty, and consult his reputation; *Curam agentes*, as Seneca speaketh, *non tantum salutis, sed et honestæ cicatricis*;§ 'having care not only to heal

* Reprehensio contumelia vacare debet. Neque monitio aspera sit, nec objurgatio contumeliosa.—Ambros. de Offic. iii. 16.

† Prov. xvii. 10. A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than a hundred stripes into a fool.

‡ Ὁ ὁδηγὸς, ὅταν λάβῃ τινὰ πλανώμενον, ἤγαγεν ἐπὶ ὁδὸν τὴν δέουσαν· οὐχὶ καταγελάσας ἢ λοιδορησάμενος ἀπῆλθε· καὶ σὺ δεῖξον αὐτῷ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ὄψει ὅτι ἀκολουθεῖ, &c.—Epict. ii. 12.

§ Sen. de Clem. i. 7. Vide Chrys. in Matt. ix. 8. Or. 29.

the wound, but to leave a comely scar behind.' 'Be,' adviseth St. Austin, 'so displeased with iniquity, as to consider and consult humanity:'* for, 'zeal void of humanity is not,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'zeal, but rather animosity; and reproof not mixed with good will, appeareth a kind of malignity.'† We should so rebuke those who, by frailty, or folly incident to mankind, have fallen into misdemeanors, that they may peceive we do sincerely pity their ill case, and tender their good; that we mean not to upbraid their weakness, or insult on their misfortune; that we delight not to inflict on them more grief than is plainly needful and unavoidable; that we are conscious and sensible of our own obnoxiousness to the like slips or falls, and do 'consider, that we also may be tempted,' and being tempted may be overborne. This they cannot perceive, or be persuaded of, except we temper our speech with benignity and mildness. Such speech‡ prudence also dictateth, as most useful and hopeful for producing the good ends honest reprehension doth aim at; it mollifieth and it melteth a stubborn heart, it subdueth and winneth a perverse will, it healeth distempered affections. Whereas roughly handling is apt to defeat or obstruct the cure; rubbing the sore doth tend to exasperate and inflame it. Harsh speech rendereth advice odious and unsavory; driveth from it, and depriveth it of efficacy: it turneth regret for a fault into displeasure and disdain against the reprover: it looks not like the dealing of a kind friend, but like the persecution of a spiteful enemy: it seemeth rather an ebullition of gall, or a defluxion from rancor, than an expression of good will: the offender will take it for a needless and pitiless tormenting, or for a proud and tyrannical domineering over him. He that can bear a friendly touch, will not endure to be lashed with angry and reproachful words. In fine, all reproof ought

* Ita succense iniquitati, ut consulere memineris humanitatis.—Aug.

† Ζῆλος φιλανθρωπίας κενὸς, οὐ ζῆλος, &c.

‡ Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. Prov. xvi. 24.

A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger. Prov. xv. 1.

to be seasoned with discretion, with candor, with moderation and meekness.

Fourthly, likewise in defence of truth, and maintenance of a good cause, we may observe, that commonly the fairest language is most proper and advantageous, and that reproachful or foul terms are most improper and prejudicial. A calm and meek way of discoursing doth much advantage a good cause, as arguing the patron thereof to have confidence in the cause itself, and to rely on his strength; that he is in a temper fit to apprehend it himself, and to maintain it; that he propoundeth it as a friend, wishing the hearer for his own good to follow it, leaving him the liberty to judge and choose for himself. But rude speech, and contemptuous reflexions on persons, as they do signify nothing to the question, so they commonly bring much disadvantage and damage to the cause, creating mighty prejudices against it: they argue much impotency in the advocate, and consequently little strength in what he maintains; that he is little able to judge well, and altogether unapt to teach others: they intimate a diffidence in himself concerning his cause, and that, despairing to maintain it by reason, he seeks to uphold it by passion; that, not being able to convince by fair means, he would bear down by noise and clamor; that, not skilling to get his suit quietly, he would extort it by force, obtruding his conceits violently as an enemy, or imposing them arbitrarily as a tyrant. Thus doth he really disparage and slur his cause, however good and defensible in itself.

A modest and friendly style doth suit truth; it, like its author, doth usually reside (not in the rumbling wind, nor in the shaking earthquake, nor in the raging fire, but) in 'the small still voice:' sounding in this, it is most audible, most penetrant, and most effectual: thus propounded, it is willingly hearkened to; for men have no aversation from hearing those who seem to love them, and wish them well. It is easily conceived; no prejudice or passion clouding the apprehensive faculties: it is readily embraced; no animosity withstanding or obstructing it. It is 'the sweetness of the lips,' which, as the wise man telleth us, 'increaseth learning;' disposing a man to hear lessons of good doctrine, rendering him capable to understand them, insi-

nuating and impressing them on the mind: the affections being thereby unlocked, the passage becomes open to the reason.

But it is plainly a very preposterous method of instructing, of deciding controversies, of begetting peace, to vex and anger those concerned by ill language. Nothing surely doth more hinder the efficacy of dicourse, and prevent conviction, than doth this course, on many obvious accounts. It doth first put in a strong bar to attention: for no man willingly doth afford an ear to him whom he conceiveth disaffected toward him; which opinion harsh words infallibly will produce: no man can expect to hear truth from him, whom he apprehendeth disordered in his own mind, whom he seeth rude in his proceedings, whom he taketh to be unjust in his dealing; as men certainly will take those to be, who presume to revile others for using their own judgment freely, and dissenting from them in opinion. Again, this course doth blind the hearer's mind, so that he cannot discern what he that pretends to instruct him doth mean, or how he doth assert his doctrine. Truth will not be discerned through the smoke of wrathful expressions; right being defaced by foul language will not appear; passion being excited will not suffer a man to perceive the sense, or the force of an argument. The will also thereby is hardened and hindered from submitting to truth. In such a case, *non persuadebis, etiamsi persuaseris:* although you stop his mouth, you cannot subdue his heart; although he can no longer fight, yet he never will yield: animosity raised by such usage rendereth him invincibly obstinate in his conceits and courses. Briefly, from this proceeding men become unwilling to mark, unfit to apprehend, indisposed to embrace any good instruction or advice: it maketh them indocile and intractable, averse from better instruction, pertinacious in their opinions, and refractory in their ways.

'Every man,' saith the wise man, 'shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer:' but no man surely will be ready to kiss those lips which are embittered with reproach, or defiled with dirty language.

It is said of Pericles, that 'with thundering and lightning

he put Greece into confusion :'* such discourse may serve to confound things, it seldom tendeth to compose them. If reason will not pierce, rage will scarce avail to drive it in.† Satirical virulency may vex men sorely, but it hardly ever soundly converts them. ' Few become wiser or better by ill words.' Children may be frighted into compliance by loud and severe increpations; but men are to be allured by rational persuasion backed with courteous usage: they may be sweetly drawn, they cannot be violently driven to change their judgment and practice. Whence that advice of the Apostle, ' With meekness instruct those that oppose themselves,' doth no less savor of wisdom than of goodness.

Fifthly, as for the examples of extraordinary persons, which in some cases do seem to authorise the practice of evil speaking, we may consider, that as they had especial commission enabling them to do some things beyond ordinary standing rules, wherein they are not to be imitated; as they had especial illumination and direction, which preserved them from swerving in particular cases from truth and equity; so the tenor of their life did evidence, that it was the glory of God, the good of men, the necessity of the case, which moved them to it.‡ And of them also we may observe, that in divers occasions, yea generally, whenever only their private credit or interest were concerned, although grievously provoked, they did out of meekness, patience, and charity, wholly forbear reproachful speech. Our Saviour, who sometimes on special reason in his discourses used such harsh words, yet, when he was most spitefully accused, reproached and persecuted, ' did not open his mouth,' or return one angry word: ' Being re-

* Βροντῶν καὶ ἀστράπτων ἐκύκα τὴν Ἑλλάδα.

† Chrys. in 2 Tim. ii. 24. Ὁ γὰρ σφυδρὸς ἔλεγχος, ὅταν μετ' ἐπιεικείας γίνεται, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ μάλιστα δακεῖν δυνάμενος· ἔνεστι γὰρ, ἔνεστι μετὰ πραότητος καθάψασθαι μᾶλλον, ἢ μετὰ θρασύτητος ἐντρέψαι.

‡ This case is like the other cases, wherein the practice of good and great men, although excusable, is not yet exemplary: as the heroical acts of David, of Sampson, of Ehud, of Phineas, of Elias, of Moses; David's duel, Sampson's suicide, Moses's slaying the Egyptian, Ehud's stabbing the king of Moab, Elias's calling for fire, by extraordinary and peculiar instinct.

viled, he did not,' as St. Peter, proposing his example to us, telleth us, 'revile again; suffering, he did not threaten.' He used the softest language to Judas, to the soldiers, to Pilate and Herod, to the priests, &c. And the Apostles, who sometimes inveigh so zealously against the opposers and perverters of truth, did in their private conversation and demeanor strictly observe their own rules of abstinence from reproach: 'Being reviled we bless, being persecuted we suffer it;' so doth St. Paul represent their practice. And in reason we should rather follow them in this their extraordinary sallies of practice.

In fine, however in some cases and circumstances the matter may admit such exceptions, so that all language disgraceful to our neighbor is not ever culpable; yet the cases are so few and rare in comparison, the practice commonly so dangerous and ticklish, that worthily forbearing to reproach doth bear the style of a general rule; and particularly, for clearer direction, we are in the following cases obliged carefully to shun it; or in speaking about our neighbor we must observe these cautions.

1. We should never in severe terms inveigh against any man without reasonable warrant, or presuming on a good call and commission thereto. As every man should not assume to himself the power of administering justice, (of trying, sentencing, and punishing offenders,) so must not every man take on him to speak against those who seem to do ill; which is a sort of punishment, including the infliction of smart and damage on the persons concerned. Every man hath indeed a commission, in due place and season, with discretion and moderation to admonish his neighbor offending; but otherwise to speak ill of him, no private man hath just right or authority: and therefore in presuming to do it he is disorderly and irregular, trespassing beyond his bounds, usurping an undue power to himself.

2. We should never speak ill of any man without apparent just cause. It must be just: we must not reproach men for things innocent or indifferent; for not concurring in disputable opinions with us, for not complying with our humor, for not serving our interest, for not doing any thing to which they are not obliged, or for using their liberty in any case: it must be

at least some considerable fault, which we can so much as tax. It must also be clear and certain, notorious and palpable; for to speak ill on slender conjectures, or doubtful suspicions, is full of iniquity. Ὅσα οὐκ οἴδασι, βλασφημοῦσι, 'they rail at things which they know not,' is part of those wicked men's character, whom St. Jude doth so severely reprehend. If indeed, these conditions being wanting, we presume to reproach any man, we do therein no less than slander him; which to do is unlawful in any case, is in truth a most diabolical and detestable crime. To impose odious names and characters on any person, which he deserveth not, or without ground of truth, is to play the devil; and hell itself scarce will own a fouler practice.

3. We should not cast reproach on any man without some necessary reason. In charity (that charity which 'covereth all sins,' which 'covereth a multitude of sins') we are bound to connive at the defects, and to conceal the faults of our brethren; to extenuate and excuse them, when apparent, so far as we may in truth and equity. We must not therefore ever produce them to light, or prosecute them with severity, except very needful occasion urgeth; such as is the glory and service of God, the maintenance of truth, the vindication of innocence, the preservation of public justice and peace, the amendment of our neighbor himself, or securing others from contagion. Barring such reasons, (really being, not affectedly pretended,) we are bound not so much as to disclose, as to touch our neighbor's faults; much more, not to blaze them about, not to exaggerate them by vehement invectives.

4. We should never speak ill of any man beyond measure: be the cause never so just, the occasion never so necessary, we should yet nowise be immoderate therein, exceeding the bounds prescribed by truth, equity, and humanity. We should never speak worse of any man whatever than he certainly deserveth, according to the most favorable construction of his doings; never more than the cause absolutely requireth. We should rather be careful to fall short of what in rigorous truth might be said against him, than in the least to pass beyond it. The best cause had better seem to suffer a little by our reservedness in its defence, than any man be wronged by our aspersing him;

for God, the patron of truth and right, is ever able to secure them without the succor of our unjust and uncharitable dealing. The contrary practice hath indeed within it a spice of slander, that is, of the worst iniquity.

5. We must never speak ill of any man out of bad principles, or for bad ends.

No sudden or rash anger should instigate us thereto, For, 'let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice,' is the apostolical precept: they are all associates and kindred, which are to be cast away together. Such anger itself is culpable, as a work of the flesh, and therefore to be suppressed; and all its brood therefore is also to be smothered: the daughter of such a mother cannot be legitimate: 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.'

We must not speak ill out of inveterate hatred or ill-will. For this murderous, this viperous disposition should itself be rooted out of our hearts; whatever issueth from it cannot be otherwise than very bad; it must be a poisonous breath that exhaleth from that foul source.

We must not be provoked thereto by any revengeful disposition, or rancorous spleen, in regard to any injuries or discourtesies received. For, as we must not revenge ourselves, or render evil in any other way; so particularly not in this, which is commonly the special instance expressly prohibited. 'Render not evil for evil,' saith St. Peter, 'nor railing for railing; but contrariwise bless,' or speak well: and, 'Bless them,' saith our Lord, 'which curse you:' 'Bless,' saith St. Paul, 'and curse not.'

We must not also do it out of contempt; for we are not to slight our brethren in our hearts. No man really (considering what he is, whence he came, how he is related, what he is capable of) can be despicable. Extreme naughtiness is indeed contemptible; but the unhappy person that is engaged therein is rather to be pitied than despised. However, charity bindeth us to stifle contemptuous motions of heart, and not to vent them in vilifying expression. Particularly, it is a barbarous practice out of contempt to reproach persons for natural imperfections, for meanness of condition, for unlucky disasters, for

any involuntary defects: this being indeed to reproach mankind, unto which such things are incident; to reproach providence, from the disposal whereof they do proceed. 'Whoso mocketh the poor despiseth his Maker,' saith the wise man; and the same may be said of him that reproachfully mocketh him that is dull in parts, deformed in body, weak in health or strength, or defective in any such way.

Likewise we must not speak ill out of envy: because others do excel us in any good quality, or exceed us in fortune. To harbor this base and ugly disposition in our minds is unworthy of a man, who should delight in all good springing up anywhere, and befalling any man, naturally allied unto him; it is most unworthy of a Christian, who should tender his brother's good as his own, and 'rejoice with those that rejoice.' From thence to be drawn to cast reproach on any man is horrible and heinous wickedness.

Neither should we ever use reproach as a means of compassing any design we do affect or aim at: it is an unwarrantable engine of raising us to wealth, dignity, or repute. To grow by the diminution, to rise by the depression, to shine by the eclipse of others, to build a fortune on the ruins of our neighbor's reputation, is that which no honorable mind can affect, no honest man will endeavor. Our own wit, courage, and industry, managed with God's assistance and blessing, are sufficient, and only lawful instruments of prosecuting honest enterprises; we need not, we must not instead of them employ our neighbor's disgrace: no worldly good is worth purchasing at such a rate, no project worth achieving by such foul ways.

Neither should we out of malignity, to cherish or gratify ill humor, use this practice. It is observable of some persons, that not out of any formed displeasure, grudge, or particular disaffection, nor out of any particular design, but merely out of a κακοήθεια, an ill disposition springing up from nature, or contracted by use, they are apt to carp at any action, and with sharp reproach to bite any man that comes in their way, thereby feeding and soothing that evil inclination. But as this inhuman and currish humor should be corrected and extirpated from our hearts, so should the issues thereof at our mouths be

stopped: the bespattering our neighbor's good name should never afford any satisfaction or delight unto us.

Nor out of wantonness should we speak ill, for our divertisement or sport. For our neighbor's reputation is too great and precious a thing to be played with, or offered up to sport; we are very foolish in so disvaluing it, very naughty in so misusing it. Our wits are very barren, our brains are ill furnished with store of knowlege, if we can find no other matter of conversation.

Nor out of negligence and inadvertency should we sputter out reproachful speech; shooting ill words at rovers, or not regarding who stands in our way. Among all temerities this is one of the most noxious, and therefore very culpable.

In fine, we should never speak concerning our neighbor from any other principle than charity, or to any other intent but what is charitable; such as tendeth to his good, or at least is consistent therewith. 'Let all your things,' saith St. Paul, 'be done in charity:' and words are most of the things we do concerning our neighbor, wherein we may express charity. In all our speeches therefore touching him, we should plainly show that we have a care of his reputation, that we tender his interest, that we even desire his content and repose. Even when reason and need do so require, that we should disclose and reprehend his faults, we may, we should, by the manner and scope of our speech, signify thus much. Which rule, were it observed, if we should never speak ill otherwise than out of charity, surely most ill-speaking would be cut off; most, I fear, of our tattling about others, much of our gossipping would be marred.

Indeed, so far from bitter or sour our language should be, that it ought to be sweet and pleasant; so far from rough and harsh, that it should be courteous and obliging; so far from signifying wrath, ill-will, contempt, or animosity that it should express tender affection, good esteem, sincere respect toward our brethren; and be apt to produce the like in them toward us: the sense of them should be grateful to the heart; the very sound and accent of them should be delightful to the ear. Every one should 'please his neighbor for his good to edifi-

cation.' Our words should always be ἐν χάριτι, 'with grace, seasoned with salt;' they should have the grace of courtesy, they should be seasoned with the salt of discretion, so as to be sweet and savory to the hearers. Commonly ill language is a certain sign of inward enmity and ill-will. Good-will is wont to show itself in good terms; it clotheth even its grief handsomely, and its displeasure carrieth favor in its face; its rigor is civil and gentle, tempered with pity for the faults and errors which it disliketh, with the desire of their amendment and recovery whom it reprehendeth. It would inflict no more evil than is necessary; it would cure its neighbor's disease without exasperating his patience, troubling his modesty, or impairing his credit. As it always judgeth candidly, so it never condemneth extremely.

II. But so much for the explication of this precept, and the directive part of our discourse. I shall now briefly propound some inducements to the observance thereof.

1. Let us consider that nothing more than railing and reviling is opposite to the nature, and inconsistent with the tenor of our religion: the which, as even a heathen* did observe of it, *nil nisi justum suadet, et lene*, 'doth recommend nothing but what is very just and mild;' which propoundeth the practices of charity, meekness, patience, peaceableness, moderation, equity, alacrity, or good humor, as its principal laws, and declareth them the chief fruits of the divine Spirit and grace: which chargeth us to curb and compose all our passions; more particularly to restrain and repress anger, animosity, envy, malice, and such like dispositions, as the fruits of carnality and corrupt lust: which consequently drieth up all the sources, or dammeth up the sluices of bad language. As it doth above all things oblige us to bear no ill-will in our hearts, so it chargeth us to vent none with our mouths.

2. It is therefore often expressly condemned and prohibited as evil. It is the property of the wicked, a character of those who 'work iniquity,' to 'whet their tongues like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words.'

3. No practice hath more severe punishments denounced to

* Ammian. Marcell.

it than this. The railer (and it is indeed a very proper and fit punishment for him, he being exceedingly bad company) is to be banished out of all good society; thereto St. Paul adjudgeth him: 'I have,' saith he, 'now written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one not to eat.' Ye see what company the railer hath in the text, and with what a crew of people he is coupled: but no good company he is allowed otherwhere; every good Christian should avoid him as a blot, and a pest of conversation: and finally he is sure to be excluded from the blessed society above in heaven; for 'neither thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God:' and, 'without,' (without the heavenly city) 'are dogs,' saith St. John in his Revelation, that is, those chiefly who out of currish spite or malignity do frowardly bark at their neighbors, or cruelly bite them with reproachful language.

4. If we look on such language in its own nature, what is it but a symptom of a foul, a weak, a disordered and distempered mind? It is the smoke of inward rage and malice: it is a stream that cannot issue from a sweet spring; it is a storm that cannot bluster out of a calm region. 'The words of the pure are pleasant words,' as the wise man saith.

5. This practice doth plainly signify low spirit, ill breeding, and bad manners; and thence misbecometh any wise, any honest, any honorable person. It agreeth to children, who are unapt and unaccustomed to deal in matters considerable, to squabble; to women of meanest rank, (apt by nature or custom to be transported with passion,) to scold. In our modern languages it is termed 'villany,' as being proper for rustic boors, or men of coarsest education and employment; who, having their minds debased by being conversant in meanest affairs, do vent their sorry passions, and bicker about their petty concernments in such strains; who also, being not capable of a fair reputation, or sensible of disgrace to themselves, do little value the credit of others, or care for aspersing it. But such language is unworthy of those persons, and cannot easily be drawn from them who are wont to exercise their thoughts about nobler

matters, who are versed in affairs manageable only by calm deliberation and fair persuasion, not by impetuous and provocative rudeness; the which do never work otherwise on masculine souls, than so as to procure disdain and resistance. Such persons, knowing the benefit of a good name, being wont to possess a good repute, prizing their own credit as a considerable good, will never be prone to bereave others of the like by opprobrious speech. A noble enemy will never speak of his enemy in bad terms.

We may farther consider that all wise, all honest, all ingenuous persons have an aversation from ill speaking, and cannot entertain it with any acceptance or complacence; that only ill-natured, unworthy, and naughty people are its willing auditors, or do abet it with applause. The good man, in the fifteenth Psalm, *non accipit opprobrium*, 'doth not take up,' or accept, 'a reproach against his neighbor:' but 'a wicked doer,' saith the wise man, 'giveth heed to false lips, and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.' And what reasonable man will do that which is disgustful to the wise and good, is grateful only to the foolish and baser sort of men; I pretermit, that using this sort of language doth incapacitate a man for to benefit his neighbor, and defeateth his endeavors for his edification, disparaging a good cause, prejudicing the defence of truth, obstructing the effects of good instruction and wholesome reproof; as we did before remark and declare. Farther,

6. He that useth this kind of speech doth, as harm and trouble others, so create many great inconveniences and mischiefs to himself thereby. Nothing so inflameth the wrath of men, so provoketh their enmity, so breedeth lasting hatred and spite, as do contumelious words. They are often called swords and arrows; and as such they pierce deeply, and cause most grievous smart; which men feeling are enraged, and accordingly will strive to requite them in the like manner, and in all other obvious ways of revenge. Hence strife, clamor and tumult, care, suspicion and fear, danger and trouble, sorrow and regret, do seize on the reviler; and he is sufficiently punished for this dealing. No man can otherwise than live in perpetual fear of reciprocal like usage from him, whom he is conscious of having so abused. Whence, if not justice or charity toward others,

yet love and pity of ourselves should persuade us to forbear it as disquietful, incommodious, and mischievous to us.

We should indeed certainly enjoy much love, much concord, much quiet, we should live in great safety and security, we should be exempted from much care and fear, if we would restrain ourselves from abusing and offending our neighbor in this kind: being conscious of so just and innocent demeanor toward him, we should converse with him in a pleasant freedom and confidence, not suspecting any bad language or ill usage from him.

7. Hence with evidently good reason is he that useth such language called a 'fool:' and he that abstaineth from it is commended as wise. 'A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.' 'A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.' 'He that refraineth his tongue is wise.' 'In the tongue of the wise is health.' 'He that keepeth his lips keepeth his life; but he that openeth wide his mouth (that is in evil-speaking, gaping with clamor and vehemency) shall have destruction.' 'The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.' 'Death and life are in the power of the tongue; and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof;' that is, of the one or the other, answerably to the kind of speech they choose.

In fine, very remarkable is that advice, or resolution of the grand point concerning the best way of living happily, in the psalmist: 'What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.' Abstinence from ill-speaking he seemeth to propose as the first step toward the fruition of a durably-happy life.

8. Lastly, we may consider that it is a grievous perverting the design of speech, (that excellent faculty, which so much distinguisheth us from, so highly advanceth us above other creatures,) to use it to the defaming and disquieting our neighbor. It was given us as an instrument of beneficial commerce and delectable conversation; that with it we might assist and advise, might cheer and comfort one another: we therefore in employing it to the disgrace, vexation, damage or prejudice in any kind, of our neighbor, do foully abuse it; and so doing,

render ourselves indeed worse than dumb beasts: for better far it were that we could say nothing, than that we should speak ill.

Now the God of grace and peace make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

END OF VOL. I.

PRINTED BY A. J. VALPY, RED LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

112694

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
AA 000 885 903 5